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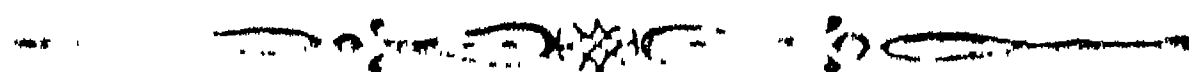
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# **INDIA IN HOME POLITY**

## **Chronicle of Events**

**July—December 1934**



# CHRONICLE OF EVENTS

JULY 1934.

1st. *Gandhi and the Socialists* :—M. Gandhi attended a conference of the Congress Socialists of Gujerat in the Harijan Ashram, Sabarmathi. M. Gandhi said that he welcomed the formation of a Socialist Party within the Congress while objecting to its programme. He said that if a class struggle implicated violence it was certainly against the present creed of the Congress but if the Congress Socialists accepted non-violence he had no objection to Congressmen participating in such a struggle. Gandhiji added that his agreement to a certain extent with the idea of divesting vested interests did not mean the confiscation of private property. He advised the Socialists to organise the masses and added that the Socialists' programme should be educative.

2nd. *Sir H. Gidney's advice to Anglo-Indians* :—Addressing a meeting of the members of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association at Doveton College, Madras Sir Henry Gidney asked them to realise that they were sons and daughters of India which was their home. He exhorted them to cultivate friendly feeling towards their Indian fellow-countrymen and to give up their present superiority complex. They had unfortunately been living a life of unreality, he said, thinking that because they had descended from the British they occupied a favoured position. He advised them to give up this idea and live on friendly terms with Indians.

4th. *Mr. Bhulabhai Desai's election tour in the South* :—Mr. Bhulabhai Desai, General Secretary of the Congress Parliamentary Board, arrived in Madras on a propaganda tour of the South in connection with the coming election to the Assembly. He conferred with the Congress workers in the city regarding the programme for an effective election campaign. He addressed a very largely attended public meeting at the Tilak Ghat in the evening when he urged the necessity for unity. Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar also addressed the meeting and appealed to the people to vote for candidates of the Congress. The same night Mr. Bhulabhai left for Trichinopoly where he opened the Swadeshi Exhibition. Mr. Bhulabhai then motored to Madura where he addressed a public meeting. He returned to Trichy and thence to Coimbatore. He returned to Madras on 8th July. He met the members of the Selection Committee and the members of the Congress Parliamentary Board and discussed selection of candidates. Mr. Bhulabhai addressed a public meeting in the evening at the High Court Beach when he appealed to the electorate to vote only for the Congressmen. Mr. Desai addressed a largely attended students' meeting at the Gokhale Hall and left for Bombay the next morning.

6th. *Sanatanist clash with Reformers* :—A clash between Sanatanists and Reformers occurred at a crowded meeting at Ajmere which was addressed by Gandhiji. Sanatanists, including Pandit Lalnath, staged a black-flag demonstration which led to a clash with the Reformers, in the course of which Pandit Lalnath was injured. This occurred before the arrival of Gandhiji who on learning of the incident expressed profound sorrow for what had happened. He announced that he would have to do penance on account of this use of violence.

*Communal Reservation in the Services* :—A Home Department resolution announced the adoption of new rules for improving the position of the Muslims in the services and providing reservations for other minorities. The new rules related only to direct recruitment and not recruitment by promotion which would continue to be made as at present solely on merit. The rules applied to the I. C. S. Central Services (Class 1 and 2) and Subordinate Services under the Government of India but did not apply to services in Burma. All railway services were also included.



- 7th. Mahatma Gandhi's Fast :—**Mahatma Gandhi commenced one week's fast at 6 A. M. after prayers at Wardha Ashram. After taking milk and fruit juice in the morning, Mahatma Gandhi announced commencement of the fast which he had resolved to undertake as penance for the acts of violence committed on the Sanatanists at Ajmer. The fast would last seven days and terminate at 6 in the morning of August 14 next. Before commencing the fast Mahatmaji attended the morning prayers when he explained to the Ashramites the circumstances which led to his decision to fast and exhorted them to devote the whole week to greater self-introspection and self-purification. He felt that the prayers of everyone would help him through the fast.
- 9th. Industries Conference at Simla :—**The sixth Industries Conference opened at Simla under the Chairmanship of Sir Frank Noyce. Ministers and Directors of Industries from the provinces and a few Indian States were present besides experts. The proceedings were not open to the Press. The main object of the Conference was to discuss the scheme of various Provincial Governments for the development of the handloom and weaving industry for which the Government of India had set apart Rs. 5 lakhs annually for five years and schemes for research in sericultural industry for which Rs. 1 lakh had been set apart annually for five years.
- 13th. Gandhiji's Advice to Student Community :—**"Service to Harijans be your foremost duty. Never treat them with contempt, they are your brothers. Try to remove their disabilities as far as possible. The poison of untouchability, handed down from generations, is eating into the vitals of the Hindu nation and should be discarded for good. The Hindu and his Dharma are deteriorating. Check the forces of disintegration and work for Hindu solidarity. If the Harijan dies, the whole Hindu Dharma perishes."—Thus said Mahatmaji addressing the Lahore students on their duty at a crowded meeting where he was presented with purses and addresses by them. Continuing he said :—"If they want to know God, they must learn to sacrifice. To serve the lowly is to serve God. The ultimate goal of education is not merely passing examinations, but service to the poor and the downtrodden which alone lead to salvation." Concluding, Mahatmaji exhorted the students to use swadeshi goods and never to deceive them by using foreign cloth.
- 14th. Sm. Amrit Kour's resolve to fast unto Death :—**Sm. Amrit Kour, wife of Jamait Singh took grim resolve to fast unto death if Bombay women and men did not respond sufficiently to her appeals for clothes for the women in Assam who had suffered much. She explained that more than 20,000 women of Assam were going about practically naked and that the sufferings of Assam were greater than those of Bihar.
- 15th. Government and Congress Funds :—**Replying to a question of Mr. G. P. Singh regarding the funds and property of the Congress seized by the Government and the question of their return, Sir Harry Haig stated in the Assembly that no action was contemplated in respect of funds and movable properties forfeited to the Government. Immovable property taken possession of under the provisions of the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act will be returned when the notification under Section 17-A of the Act ceases to be in force.
- 16th. Flood havoc in North Bihar :—**Incessant rains resulted in the rising of the rivers in North Bihar. The countryside and several important roads in the districts of Muzaffarpur, Champaran, Chapra and Dharbhanga were submerged. The recent earthquake, it was stated, had changed the course of many of the rivers, contributing to the seriousness of the floods. The flood level in Motihari was stated to be higher than the highest level ever recorded there. Vigorous steps were being taken by officials and the Bihar Central Relief Committee to deal with the situation.
- 17th. Allegations of Midnapore Officials' misconduct refuted :—**Sir Harry Haig, the Home Member, placed on the table of the Assembly a statement on the enquiries made by local authorities into the allegations against the conduct of troops and civil officials in Midnapore. The statement denied the allegation that

teachers and students were compelled to appear against their will to greet troops and in no case had any teacher been deprived of his grant-in-aid on account of his absence from such festivities. The allegation that Congressmen were flogged and the members of their families roughly handled if they refused to salute the Union Jack was also denied.

**22nd. Tributes to the late Mr. Sen Gupta :—**Glowing tributes to the memory of late Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta were paid by Congress leaders at a mammoth public meeting held at Madras in connection with his death anniversary. Mr. K. Nageswara Rao Pantulu presided. Mr. Bhulabhai Desai referred to the services rendered to the country and the sacrifices made by Mr. Sen Gupta and appealed to those present to emulate his example. "If work is done in that spirit", Mr. Desai concluded, "the world will soon see a great race and nation raised to the height which it deserves".

**Mahatmaji on the implications of the Harijan Movement :—**Speaking at a public meeting at Cawnpore, Mahatmaji referred to the implications of the Harijan movement. It is limited to the removal of the feeling of superiority and inferiority, he said, and has nothing to do with inter-dining and inter-marriage. They are matters of individual choice. The movement claims for Harijans the same social, civic and religious rights as belong to any other Hindus. Regarding the question of temple-entry, Gandhiji added that no temple was sought to be opened for Harijans except with the full consent of those who attended that temple for worship.

**Muslim Unity Board on Communal unity :—**The election manifesto of the All-India Muslim Unity Board issued to the Press emphasized the existence of complete unity between the various communities in India as the condition precedent to the attainment of freedom for the country and enumerated the efforts made by it to bring about harmony of views among Indians on political questions. The Board said the manifesto shall continue its efforts in this direction with a view to ultimately securing for India the right of making her own constitution. The manifesto enjoined on all members of the Board (1) to stand by the Communal Award in the absence of any other constitutional scheme acceptable to all the communities concerned; (2) to endeavour to achieve political and economic freedom for the country; (3) to introduce or support such legislation as will create harmonious relation between labour and capital, landlords and tenants and relieve unemployment and, (4) to protect Islamic Shariat from legislative inroads and oppose such measures as might interfere with it and consult Ulemas on religious matters arising in legislatures and act accordingly. As regards the White Paper the manifesto said that the Board was at one with other political organizations that its provisions fell far short of legitimate aspirations of the country and, therefore, it was totally unacceptable to Muslims. The manifesto in conclusion appealed to all Muslims voters to cast their votes in favour of Board's nominees.

**23rd. Ban on Communist Associations :—**The Government of India issued a notification declaring the Communist Party of India, its committees and branches to be unlawful associations within the meaning of Part 2 of the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908. The reason for the ban was stated to be that the association and its branches had for their object interference with the administration of law and constituted a danger to public peace.

**Mrs. Amrit Kuar's fast for Suffering Assam Sisters :—**Srimati Amrit Kuar wife of Sardar Jamiat Singh started fast unto death from to-day as a protest against what she called the indifference of India towards thousands of flood-sufferers in Assam. She broke fast on the next morning on the request of Mr. K. F. Nariman and Mr. Abid Ally, who assured her that the Congress Working Committee would issue an all-India appeal for help for Assam in her distress.

**24th. Madras Congress Socialist Group :—**At a meeting of the Madras Congress Socialist Group it was resolved that the association should consist of Socialists who were Congress members of the city of Madras and that the group should act as an affiliating institution for Socialist Congressmen of other centres of the

Madras presidency. The object of the group was stated to be the conversion of the Congress institution in the presidency to the Socialistic programme. The group accept that political independence of India is indispensable in order to achieve Socialism and therefore will co-operate with the Congress in its fight for national freedom and will be subject to general Congress discipline for that purpose.

**28th. Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney resign :—**Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney of the Congress Parliamentary Board resigned from that Board. The reason for taking such a step was the decision of the Board not to change its original decision over the resolution passed by the Congress Working Committee on the question of the Communal Award. Pandit Malaviya insisted that the Award should be definitely rejected and was not prepared for a compromise over the matter which, according to him, involved a vital principle. Moulana Abul Kalam Azad was elected President of the Parliamentary Board. The Board then adopted the election manifesto after which Gandhiji made a moving speech in support of the manifesto. The manifesto appealed to the voters of the Legislative Assembly to vote for the Congress candidates at the ensuing elections. The Congress candidates, said the manifesto, will not only fight for the rejection of the White Paper and for the acceptance of the Constituent Assembly, but also for the repeal of all repressive laws and Ordinances passed with the help of the elected members' votes to meet the Congress non-violent non-cooperation movement. "It will also be their duty," continued the manifesto, "to demand an impartial scrutiny of the methods adopted by the Bengal Government to meet terrorism, and to take measures to give effect to public opinion in regard to them."

**31st. Inauguration of the Indian Academy of Science :—**The Indian Academy of Science was inaugurated by Sir Mirza Ismail, Dewan of Mysore, at Bangalore. There was a large and representative gathering including scientists from all parts of India. Sir Mirza Ismail, in the course of his speech, said that India's new position in international science demanded the foundation of a permanent central institution charged with the functions of representing Indian scientific opinion as a whole, of safeguarding the position of research and of offering reliable guidance in scientific matters.

**Aney-Malaviya Formed a New Party :—**Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney formed a new party under the name of the Nationalist Party, which differed from the Congress, mainly in this that, while the Congress Party would concentrate the attention of voters on the rejection of the White Paper, the Nationalist Party would direct its attack both on White Paper and the Communal Award.

## AUGUST 1934.

**6th. Assembly passes the Detenus Bill :—**The Legislative Assembly passed the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Bill by 54 votes to 34. Mr. Bhagatram Pari, recording a protest against the Bill, contended that terrorism was but a passing phase and not a permanent feature of Bengal life and so such legislation should not be given a permanent lease of life. Mr. B. Das attributed terrorism to acute unemployment. Dewan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, on behalf of the Independents, said that his party would vote against the measure as Government was not prepared to limit the life of the Bill to three years. The Home Member, replying to the debate, said that the decision of the Government to make powers permanent did not mean that the Act would necessarily remain on the statute book for ever. So long as there was terrorist danger, this valuable weapon would be available for use and it could be repealed when terrorism was brought under control.

**7th. Mahatma's Fast :—**Gandhiji commenced his seven days' fast at 6 a.m. at the Satyagraha Ashram at Wardha. Addressing a few Ashramites who had gathered round him, Gandhiji said that the removal of untouchability was impossible without self-introspection and self-purification. Mahatma said that

the All-India tour had been a strain and he was conscious that he was weak. He added that the fast would be trying and asked those assembled to pray to God to grant him strength to get through the ordeal. Doctors tried to persuade Gandhiji to postpone the fast for a week so that his general condition might improve but Gandhiji said the decision was irrevocable.

*"I am in no hurry to find myself in prison"* :—In an interview to pressmen, after the termination of his Harijan tour and his self-imposed restriction, Gandhiji stated that he was in no hurry to find himself behind prison bars. "On the contrary", he said, "I shall try to avoid it to the best of my ability." He proposed to devote himself to the continuation of the Harijan work and the rest of the constructive programme of the Congress. He added that freedom through non-violent means could be achieved only if the workers devote themselves whole-heartedly to such constructive work.

8th. *Malaviya-Aney Campaign against the Communal Award* :—Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney, in the course of a statement regarding the proposed formation of a Nationalist Party, said that in view of the grave national importance of the question of the country's attitude towards the Communal Award they had decided to secure a hearing for what they believed to be the correct national and rational view, both in the country and in the legislatures. To carry out this object, they proposed to form a Nationalist Party to organise a campaign throughout the country against the Communal Award as well as the White Paper and to set up in each province a certain number of such candidates for election to the Assembly as will work for the rejection of both. The membership of the Party would be open to all Indians regardless of caste or creed and the party would work on strictly national lines and would co-operate in any endeavour to bring about an agreed solution of the communal problem. The party did not approve of legislative interference in matters of religion.

*Congress Election Campaign* :—Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar and some other prominent Congress leaders addressed a large gathering at "Gandhi Vanam", Madras and appealed to the people to support the candidates of the Congress in the ensuing elections to the Assembly. Mrs. Rukmani Lakshmi-pathi, who presided, expressed the hope that the voters would give proof of their patriotism and their abiding loyalty to the Congress. Mr. S. Satyamurthi said that he stood before them as a candidate chosen by the Congress and requested them to give their votes in his favour on behalf of the Congress.

9th. *Sanatanists' Election Manifesto* :—The All-India Sanatanist Election Board issued its election manifesto. The Sanatanists' programme included, among others, the securing of statutory guarantees, of non-interference by the State in the religious and socio-religious beliefs and practices, opposing all movements, activities and measures of an anarchical or communistic nature, opposing the Communal Award and Poona Pact.

*Walk-out in Burma Council* :—The Governor of Burma refused sanction to the motion of "no-confidence" against the President of the Burma Legislative Council. The Governor, in his message to the Council, said that it was inadvisable to remove the President, Sir Oscar de Glanville, on such flimsy grounds disclosed in the members' speeches. After the message was read out in the Council, U Saw brought a motion that the business of the House be adjourned to enable members to discuss outside the situation arising out of the Governor's decision. The President ruled out the motion whereupon all Burmese members except seven walked out as a protest against the ruling. Disorderly scenes were witnessed on the next day when the Council was discussing a non-official resolution. U. Saw stood up in the middle of the discussion and wanted to read a letter to the President who asked him not to interrupt the proceedings. But U. Saw read the letter which called upon the President to resign. Some European and Indian members and the official bloc protested against this while the Burmese members banged the tables and shouted. The President asked the interrupters to go out and they were followed by other Burmese members also excepting nine.

11th. *Bengal Hindus and the Communal Award* :—At a public meeting held at the Albert Hall, Calcutta, under the auspices of the Bengal Provincial Hindu



Sabha the resolution of the Congress Working Committee on the Communal Award was discussed. The meeting adopted a resolution deploring the decision of the Congress Working Committee and the Congress Parliamentary Board in relation to the Award and reiterating its opposition to the same as anti-national, undemocratic and unjust. Further, the meeting expressed its appreciation of the bold stand taken by Pandit Malaviya and Mr. M. S. Aney in the matter of Congress Working Committee's decision on the Communal Award.

**18th. Nationalist Party Conference :—**The Conference convened by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya to usher into existence a new party to be known as the Nationalist Party to fight the Congress candidates in the forthcoming Assembly election met in Calcutta under Pandit Malaviya's presidency at the Ram Mohan Library Hall. In his welcome address, Acharya P. C. Ray, President of the Reception Committee, hoped that the Nationalist Party Conference would be a party within the sheltering bosom of Indian National Congress. In his presidential address, Pandit Malaviya dwelt on the evils of separate electorate and emphasised the objection to the Communal Award. Replying to a question from a delegate as to whether the Nationalist Party would be a party within the Congress, the President said that it was a difficult question to answer. If need be his party would work outside the Congress and might include in it men who did not entirely subscribe to the creed of the Party, which was identical with the object of the Congress.

**21st. Mettur Project Inauguration :—**The Cauveri-Mettur irrigation project was inaugurated by His Excellency Sir George Stanley. The scheme consists of a dam which is the largest in the world and which forms a reservoir to store the flood waters of the Cauveri and supply water to the delta as and when necessary. The reservoir, besides benefitting the ryots of the Tanjore district by ensuring a steady supply of water provides for the irrigation of a new area of 301,000 acres in the Tanjore district. The function commenced with the Chief Engineer's statement giving the history and particulars of the work.

**22nd. Madras District Political Conference :—**The Madras District Political Conference which met at the "Congress Mandap", Royapettah in the city, under the presidency of Mr. T. S. Avanasilingam Chettier of Coimbatore, passed a number of resolutions. Mr. S. Satyamurthi moved a resolution which welcomed the decisions of the A. I. C. C. and Working Committee passed at Patna, Wardha, Bombay and Benares and called upon all Congressmen in the city of Madras to do all in their power to give effect to them. The resolution was passed unanimously. Mr. N. S. Varadachari's resolution appealing to the citizens of Madras to support the Congress in all its endeavours in the national cause and to vote for the Congress candidates in the ensuing elections was also passed. Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar then moved a resolution appealing to all Congressmen in the city and mofussil to make a strenuous and united endeavour to secure the unqualified support of the electorate and the successful return of the Congress candidates in the Province. Then, resolutions condemning the Ottawa Agreement, pleading for support to Swadeshi and urging that khadi should receive unqualified preference were also passed.

**23rd. Government oppose Temple-Entry Bill :—**In the Assembly Mr. C. S. Ranga Aiyar moved that his Temple-entry Bill be referred to a select committee and, in doing so, condemned the Congress and Congressmen and said that they had betrayed the cause of the Harijans. The Bill was vehemently opposed by the Raja of Kollengode who characterised it as dangerous, obnoxious and deserving of summary rejection. He quoted copious extracts from opinions received on the Bill from various Provincial Governments to support his contention. Sir Mahomed Yakub, while expressing heartfelt sympathy with the object of the Bill, opposed it on the ground that the Assembly consisting of members of various religions should not pass legislation on religious matters. Raja Bahadur Krishnamachariar contributed his own quota of arguments on behalf of the Sanatanists. Sir Henry Craik, explaining the attitude of the Government in regard to the Bill, said that the Government opposed the Bill on a matter of principle and on the ground that the measure was impracticable and likely to lead to serious disturbance. The Bill, if enforced, would mean a serious invasion

of private rights. That was the opinion of several Provincial Governments. Sir Henry, in conclusion, advised reformers to employ methods of persuasion and not to force upon the country an irritating measure. Sir N. N. Sircar, the Law Member, appealed to Mr. Ranga Aiyar to withdraw his Bill, as in matters of social reform the minority should try to convince and convert the majority to their views. Mr. Ranga Aiyar withdrew his motion in view of the opposition to the Bill.

*Social Reform Conference at Trichy*:—The First Tamil Nadu Social Reform Conference was held at Trichinopoly, Dr. P. Varadarajulu Naidu presiding. Mr. N. Sankaran, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in welcoming the delegates, pleaded for compulsory elementary education, widow re-marriage and temperance. The President, in his address, pleaded for equal rights to men and women in matters of education, right to property and other rights. Untouchability, he said, should be made a criminal offence. The Conference passed a number of resolutions demanding equal rights for members of all communities in public choultries, streets, tanks, places of worship, remarriage of widows and demanding the extension of the Brothels Act to the whole of India.

**25th.** *Demand for the release of Mr. Sarat Bose*:—Unequivocal condemnation of the principle of detention without trial was expressed at a crowded public meeting at Calcutta. After protesting against the continued incarceration of Mr. Sarat Bose without cause and without trial, the meeting demanded his unconditional and immediate release or his trial. Kumar Shiva Shekureshwar Roy, ex-Minister, Bengal Government, presided. This demand for the release of Mr. Sarat Bose was followed by a resolution of the Calcutta Corporation which expressed its disapproval of the continued detention of Mr. Bose.

**28th.** *Equal Status for Indian Officers in the Army*:—During the discussion on the Army Bill in the Assembly, Sir Abdur Rahim moved an amendment that "the status and opportunities for promotion and power of command, rank and precedence of Indian Commissioned Officers in the Indian Army shall be the same as that of British Officers in the Indian Army in units and formations." The Government contended that the motion was not in order since the amendment in question sought to amend the British Army Act, an Act of Parliament and that under Section 65 of the Government of India Act the Indian Legislature could not take into consideration any motion which sought to amend an enactment by the Parliament. The President overruled the Government's objection and held that the amendment was in order. He held that according to Section 65 of the Government of India Act the Indian Legislature had power to make laws for the Officers etc., in His Majesty Indian Forces, the expression Indian Forces connoting both Indian and British officers serving in the Army in India. The President also held that the Bill before the House created a new class of officers which comprised both Indians and Britishers, and therefore the House had per se jurisdiction to legislate in regard to both classes of officers.

**29th.** *H. E. the Viceroy's address to the Central Legislature*:—H. E. the Viceroy addressed the members of the Central Legislature. After surveying the work done during the past year and the economic and political condition of the country at the present time, the Viceroy urged friendly co-operation between all classes of political thought in the country and devote themselves to the solution of the various problems before the country. His Excellency then referred to the celebration, next year, of the 25th anniversary of the Accession to the Throne of His Majesty the King-Emperor and hoped that the princes and people of India would join in celebrating the occasion in a most fitting manner. Regarding the reforms scheme, His Excellency said that it was not possible for him to forecast information as to what recommendations the report of the Select Committee was likely to contain. The general impression, His Excellency added, gathered during his short stay in England was full of goodwill and sympathy for the natural aspirations of Indians in regard to their political advance. His Excellency assured the members of the Legislature that when the Reforms Bill was passed into law, no time would be lost in carrying into effect the intentions of Parliament as expressed in the Act. The Viceroy, in conclusion, stressed on the need for Indo-British co-operation,

*Navy Bill Passed* :—The Legislative Assembly passed the Indian Navy (Discipline) Bill. Colonel Lumby, moving for consideration of the Bill, said that the effect of the Bill would be indirectly to increase the status and efficiency of the service. As regards Indianisation, he said, that recruitment would be regulated in the proportion of one Indian to two British officers.

*Liberals condemn White Paper* :—The Council of the National Liberal Federation of India met at the "Leader" office, in Allahabad, under the presidentship of Mr. J. N. Basu. The Council passed a resolution requesting the President and the General Secretaries to publish tracts with a view to influence the electorate of the Legislative Assembly on the most important public issues before the electorate. The council laid special emphasis on the resolutions passed at the session of the Liberal Federation at Calcutta in April 1930, expressing disappointment at the White Paper. Resolutions were also adopted strongly protesting against the recent legislation passed by the Zanzibar Legislative Council which deprived the Indian community of existing rights and adversely affected Indian interests, and urging the Government of India to prevent by every means in their power the injustice to the Indian community in Zanzibar.

*Agra Hindus' grievances* :—A memorial signed by nearly 11,000 Hindu citizens of Agra submitted to H. E. the Governor of U. P. urging His Excellency's intervention in the anti-Namaz dispute and requesting His Excellency to see that the law is enforced without distinction of caste or creed. In the course of the memorial, the signatories stated that the order of the District Magistrate imposing restrictions regarding the time of Arati had so emboldened Mahomedans that they now demand change in the time of Arati in the various temples in Agra and in case of non-compliance threaten to use force. Even Muslims saying prayers in their own houses ask for the stoppage of Arati until their prayers are finished, and music in Hindu houses far away from mosques has been interfered with.

**31st.** *The Assembly Committee's Report on the Ottawa Agreement* was presented to the Assembly. The Report appended to it a minute of dissent by Sir Abdur Rahim and Mr. K. C. Neogy and another by Mr. B. Sitarama Raju. The minutes of dissent were much longer than the Report itself. The minute of dissent by Sir Abdur Rahim and Mr. K. C. Neogy says that they are unable to agree with the general trend of the Majority Report or accept their main conclusions. Their conclusions are as follows :—(1) "Preferences given by the United Kingdom to our agricultural products have not, to any extent that matters, helped India to recover her lost ground. On the other hand, preferences given by us to the United Kingdom's imports have adversely affected our foreign markets. (2) Heavy deficiency in our exports, which is a most disquieting feature of the situation, is mainly due to the weakening of our foreign markets and the small increase in exports, that there has been in 1933-34, as compared with the previous year, is not such as to reassure us that India is on a fair way to economic and financial recovery. Having regard to the economic policies adopted practically by all other countries, a trade agreement on the basis of mutual interests seems to be inevitable.

Therefore, we recommend to the Government of India that they should take immediate steps to come to definite agreements on the system of quotas with all important countries that deal with us including the United Kingdom, so that our trade position may be established on a surer basis. The Ottawa Agreement should at least be modified to the extent necessitated by such agreements."

## SEPTEMBER 1934

**4th.** *Die-hard Glee at the Tory Party Voting* :—Uproarious scenes were witnessed at the Conservative Party Conference at Bristol. Sir Henry Page Croft moved his resolution on the Government's India policy. The resolution stated that the Conference was prepared to support measures for a greater measure of self-Government in the Provinces, step by step, but opposed the partnership between Britain and India in the Central Government. An amendment was moved that,

in view of the decision of the Conference at Birmingham in 1933 that no final conclusion would be reached till the Select Committee had made its recommendations, it was not in the interests of the Party that the Conference should pass any resolution. Those who spoke against Sir H. Page Croft's resolution were considerably interrupted. The amendment when put to vote was carried by 543 votes to 510. Sir H. Page Croft was very jubilant over the result and declared, in an interview to Reuter, that the result showed a remarkable increase in the number of those who realised the perils of the Indian reforms.

**6th. Breakdown of Compromise Talks at Wardha :—**All hopes of a rapprochement between the Congress Parliamentary Board and Pandit Malaviya's Nationalist Party over the forthcoming elections to the Assembly were shattered. The Parliamentary Board would now put up their own candidates, leaving a few seats to the Malaviya group by not opposing their candidates.

**7th. Bombay Muslim Educational Conference :** The seventeenth session of the Bombay Muslim Educational Conference was held at the Faroon Hall, Poona, under the presidentship of Sir Akbar Hydari. In the course of his address, the president appealed for communal amity and said that until that problem was solved satisfactorily, there could be no security for educational and social progress in India. Speaking on the basic aims of education, Sir Hydari said that the formation of sound character was one of them and for Muslims religious instruction was a *sin qua non* of education from the point of view of character building. To secure greater solidarity, he said, a common language was needed and Urdu, he added, was admirably fitted to become the vehicle of modern scientific thought. He urged the need for much greater advance in education among the Muslims. He also stressed on the necessity for industrial and technical business and secretarial education.

**9th. Congress Goal of Independence Reiterated ;—**The Working Committee of the Congress which met at Wardha passed a resolution reiterating the goal of the Congress as Poorna Swaraj or complete independence and appealing to all Congressmen to give effect to the resolutions and instructions that may from time to time be issued by the A. I. C. C. or the Working Committee. Poorna Swaraj included unfettered national control, among other things, over the army, external affairs, fiscal and commercial matters, financial and economic policy. Free India should have freedom to make its choice between voluntary partnership with the British and complete separation.

**16th. Anti-Terrorist Conference :—**The Anti-Terrorist Conference was held at the Town Hall, Calcutta, under the chairmanship of Mr. J. N. Basu. Mr. P. N. Tagore, Chairman of the Reception Committee, opening the Conference, said that there was no more effective way of combating terrorism than by laying a broad foundation of knowledge concerning the duties and obligations of every citizen. The president, in his address, appealed for mutual co-operation between the public and the Government, in order that the campaign against terrorism might succeed. The Conference condemned terrorism as baneful and against the culture and traditions of India.

**17th. Mahatma explains reason for Retirement from Congress :—**Mahatma Gandhi issued a lengthy statement in the course of which he confirmed the rumour that he had contemplated severing all physical connection with the Congress. Stating his reasons among other things for the contemplated step which he had deferred until after the ensuing Bombay session of the Congress, Mahatmaji said that there existed fundamental differences of outlook between the Congress intelligentsia and himself. The upshot of these differences, he declared, had been that they have 'sterilized the existing Congress programme, because members who gave their lip assent to it without believing in it have naturally failed to reduce it to practice.' Mahatmaji further stated that although the country had made great strides towards non-violence, he felt that it had not been 'unadulterated non-violence in thought, word and deed.' Mahatmaji said that it was now his paramount duty to devise ways and means of showing demonstrably to the Government and the



terrorists the efficacy of non-violence as a means of achieving the right thing, including freedom in every sense of the term. Mahatmaji reiterated his faith in removal of untouchability, work for Hindu-Muslim Unity, total prohibition, hand-spinning and Khaddar, and Swadeshi, which items he included in the next programme he would place before the Congress. Finally, Mahatmaji asserted in effect that no voluntary organisation can succeed in its purpose without its resolution and policies being carried out wholeheartedly by its members, and no leader could give a good account of himself if his lead was not faithfully, ungrudgingly and intelligently followed.

**29th. Tamil Nadu Provincial Conference :—**The thirty-sixth Tamil Nadu Provincial Conference was held at Coimbatore, under the presidency of Mr. K. Rajagopalachariar. Delegates from all the Tamil districts attended. Before the Conference began, Mr. Rajagopalachariar and other Congress leaders were taken in a procession, and the National Flag was hoisted by Mrs. Cousins at the spacious lawn in front of the Y. M. C. A. Mr. Balusu Sambamurthi opened the Conference. The Hon. Mr. V. C. Vellingiri Gounder, Member of the Council of State and President, Coimbatore District Board, in his welcome address said that such a nationalist party as the Congress was needed in the legislatures to safeguard the rights of the masses. He appealed to the electorate to support the Congress and through it to show their eagerness for the country's freedom. In his Presidential Address Mr. Rajagopalachariar dwelt at length on the constructive programme of the Congress and said that the carrying out of the programme would make the organisation once more alive and strong. Referring to the question of Gandhiji's retirement from the Congress, the President said the contemplated step would strengthen and not weaken the Congress as Gandhiji did not intend to retire from politics nor to oppose or diminish the influence of the Congress. He added that a compromise might be arrived at by which Gandhiji might be enabled to form an organisation inside the Congress along the lines that Gandhiji desired. Mr. Rajagopalachariar defended the attitude of the Congress Working Committee regarding the Communal Award and said that agreement between the different communities was the only solution to the problem. He concluded with an appeal to all Congressmen to work for the victory of the Congress in the coming elections.

**South Indian Liberal Federation :—**The thirteenth confederation of the South Indian Liberal Federation held its session at Victoria Public Hall, in Madras under the presidency of the Hon. the Raja of Bobbili, the Chief Minister with the Government of Madras. Dewan Bahadur P. T. Kumaraswami Chetty, in his welcome address, referred to the question of the admission of Brahmins into the party and said that by the removal of the ban the party would be shedding off the one target of accusation which their political opponents always aimed at. He then referred to the programme of the Congress and said that it was impracticable. The President, in the course of his address, said that he welcomed the change in the programme of the Congress. He next referred to the record of the Justice Party and said that it had demonstrated to the world that Indians were capable of managing their own affairs. He then stressed on the need for clear-cut party system. Concluding, he appealed to the members of the Justice Party to support the party's candidates for the elections to the Assembly. The Conference passed a resolution raising the ban on the admission of Brahmins into the party and the amendment of the constitution for the purpose. The question was not discussed at length since an agreement had been reached at informal discussions among the leaders.

## OCTOBER 1934

**1st. Congress Socialists not to Participate in Election :—**Leading Congress Socialists held a meeting at Benares and decided not to participate in the Congress in

contesting the elections. Mr. Sampurnanand presided. It was also resolved that Socialists should decline to be office-bearers of any Congress organisation. The formation of the Nationalist Party was condemned as communalist and anti-national.

*Mr. Sastri on Gandhiji's Proposals* :—"The Congress is not meant for saints and sages. It is meant for the common men and women," observed the Right Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, addressing the Bombay Young Men's Hindu Association. Mr. M. R. Jayakar was in the chair. Mr. Sastri pointed out that the proposals of Mahatmaji were too rigid for the ordinary run of humanity to follow. In his opinion, the spinning franchise would promote hypocrisy and to introduce in the Congress creed the words "truthful and non-violent" was to lay down a moral obligation which the ordinary Congressman could not keep. Mahatmaji's proposals amounted to closing the doors of the great political organisation against thousands of thinking men, honest and sincere patriots. Replying to Mr. Sastri's criticism, Mr. Bhulabhai Desai, General Secretary of the Congress Parliamentary Board, said that Indians would be more content to have the madness of Mahatmaji than to have the cold, dispassionate and death-like senility of the Liberals.—It was subsequently understood that Gandhiji had definitely abandoned the idea of moving any amendment to the Congress constitution as foreshadowed in his recent statement. He proposed to retire from the Congress and not from the country's politics.

*Communal Award A Bar to Swaraj: Malaviyaji's Firm Declaration* :—In the course of an address at Cawnpore, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya said that the Constitution promised by the British was founded on the Communal Award. It was not a question of Hindus or of Muslims, but was purely one of Swaraj. The Award had divided the country into any number of electorates and had thus delayed Swaraj indefinitely. Unless, therefore, the Award was rejected in toto, no Swaraj was possible.

**5th. Inauguration of the Indian Navy** :—The inauguration of the Royal Indian Navy took place at the Royal Indian Marine dockyard, in Bombay, amidst the booms of guns and in the presence of a large gathering of Naval and Military officers. Vice-Admiral Sir H. T. Walwyn performed the inauguration ceremony. Numerous telegrams of congratulations were received on the occasion. A salute of 31 guns fired from the flagships was the last item in the programme.

**7th. Madras District Co-operative Conference** :—The fifth annual session of the Madras District Co-operative Conference was held with the Hon. Dewan Bahadur G. Narayanaswami Chettiar in the chair. Mr. A. Sivarama Menon, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in the course of his address, pleaded for educating the average citizen to take a real interest in the co-operative movement and for evolving a scheme of reconstruction by which the suffering population would be enabled to find some real relief. The two pressing problems that confront the co-operator to-day, Mr. Sivarama Menon said, were the growing unemployment and the appalling increase in the indebtedness of the people. He advocated the appointment of a committee to take steps to conduct an economic survey of the city in order to ascertain the exact extent of indebtedness and unemployment. The President, in his address, referred to the deplorable condition of the rural population and said that unless Government moved in the matter without delay the condition of the rural population would become irredeemable. Resolutions were passed requesting the Government to take early steps for the starting of a central co-operative College and to constitute an arbitration board for the city to deal with co-operative disputes. It was also resolved to organise a co-operators' league in each municipal division of the city, and to take steps to organise non-credit co-operative societies in the city like restaurants, laundries, etc.

*Trichy Youths' Conference* :—An appeal to the youth to dedicate themselves to the service of the nation was made by Mr. Kama Raj of Virudhunagar, who presided over the District National Youth Conference held at Trichinopoly. In welcoming the delegates to the conference, Mr. P. M. Veerapan exhorted the youth to accord their full support to the Congress candidates. The conference

expressed its complete confidence in Mahatma Gandhi and his leadership and requested him not to retire from the Congress. An appeal to the nation to work the constructive programme of the Congress was also made.

**12th. Bengal Muslim Youth Conference :—**Sir Abdur Rahim, who opened the All Bengal Muslim Young Men's Conference at Calcutta, deplored the fact that eminent public men like Pandit Malaviya should have chosen the present time to force the question of Communal Award on the country. Mr. A. K. Fazlul Haq, who presided, urged Muslims to work for the economic uplift of the masses. He regretted the lack of organisation among Muslims and said that if they did not make themselves fit for the coming changes they would be pushed to the wall despite the provisions contained in the White Paper. The conference adopted resolutions protesting against the anti-Communal Award campaign, and calling upon Muslims not to support any candidate for the Assembly who did not vote for Sir Abdur Rahim's amendment to the Army Bill.

**17th. Mysore Co-operative Conference :—**The twenty-first Mysore Provincial Co-operative Conference was held at Mysore, under the presidency of Prof. H. L. Kaji, Vice-President of the All-India Co-operative Institutes' Association. The greatest need of the co-operative movement, said the President, was the education of the villager, and he urged co-operative societies to take in hand the question of reconstruction of the villages through adult education. Among the resolutions passed was one for de-officialisation of the co-operative movement. The conference favoured the appointment of Honorary Assistant Registrars and Honorary Registrars of Co-operative Societies.

**21st. Kerala Provincial Congress Socialist Conference :—**The first session of the Kerala Provincial Congress Socialists' Conference was held at Calicut, Mr. H. D. Rajah presiding. The conference demanded the immediate release of all political prisoners. It reaffirmed the Congress objective of complete independence and called upon all Congress Socialists to strive for the establishment of a Socialist form of government. The conference did not favour the yarn franchise and the present programme of the Congress. In his concluding remarks, the president said that they were not an anti-Gandhi party as some thought but they felt that Gandhiji was only a historical force and no predominance should be given on the basis of individuality.

**All-India Socialists' Conference :—**The All-India Socialists' Conference held its session at Worli, Bombay. The proceedings of the conference were marked by novel departure from the conventional practices. The conference had no president elected in advance and the delegates were called upon to elect their own chairman. Swami Sampurnanand was unanimously elected president. The first resolution adopted by the conference affirmed India's goal as complete independence—establishment of an independent State wherein power is transferred to the producing masses. The programme of the Congress was disapproved. The Conference declared its opposition to participation by India in any war in which the British Government may be involved.

**25th. Anti-Communal Award Conference :—**The All-India Anti-Communal Award Conference was held at the Arya Samaj Pandal, opposite the Congress Nagar, in Bombay. Inaugurating the Conference, Pandit Malaviya said that nowhere in the world has self-government been reared on the foundations of separate electorates. Pandit Malaviya analysed the Award and showed how it was anti-national and inimical to the growth of self-government, in so far as it sought to create as many as eighteen separate classes. Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, in his presidential address, said that the communal controversy was of British parentage. He refuted Mr. MacDonald's plea for the continuance of separate electorates for depressed classes and separate communal electorates for women. Concluding, Mr. Chatterjee said that true non-religious democratic politics were the only solution for India's ills. The Conference passed a resolution characterising the Communal Award as anti-national and undemocratic and requesting the Congress to reverse the Working Committee's decision on the Award.

- 26th. *The Forty-eighth Indian National Congress* :—**The forty-eighth session of the Indian National Congress was held at Worli, Bombay, three and a half years after its last normal session. The Congress Nagar was named Abdul Gaffar Nagar, after the veteran Frontier Congressman, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan. Nearly 60,000 visitors, delegates and Reception Committee members assembled and volunteers had a rather hard time managing the traffic to and from the Congress pandal. Mr. Nariman, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcomed the delegates and then decorated Babu Rajendra Prasad with the Presidential badge. In the course of his welcome address Mr. Nariman surveyed the activities of the Congress since its last normal session.
- 27th. *U. P. Women's Conference* :—**The eighth United Provinces Women's Constituent Conference was held at Lucknow, the Rani of Sherkot presiding. In her presidential address, the Rani pleaded for provision of greater facilities for education of girls and for elevating the status of Indian women in the eyes of the law. The conference passed resolutions urging Government to introduce necessary amendments to the Child Marriage Restraint Act so as to make child marriages impossible, demanding that the existing laws regarding women's rights should be so amended as to make them just and equitable, and requesting that an All-India Commission be appointed to consider the means to remove the legal disabilities of women regarding marriage, inheritance, divorce etc., and requesting the Education Department of the U. P. Government to introduce compulsory scientific and temperance education.
- 27th. *Tamil Nadu Women's Conference* :—**The Tamil Nadu Constituent Conference of the All-India Women's Conference was held at Kolipatti under the Chairmanship of Mrs. Nesamani Paul, ex-Municipal Councillor and Secretary of the Ladies' Club, Palamcottah. In the course of her speech, the president said that the women of India should take a more active part in the public life of the country. She pleaded for compulsory education for girls. Then resolutions were passed, amongst others, demanding the removal of disabilities imposed by Hindu Law on women, requesting that women should be appointed as jurors and assessors in Courts of law and making the penalty clauses in the Child Marriage Restraint Act more stringent.
- 30th. *Mahatma Gandhi on Congress Decision* :—**"My interest in the Congress organisation will henceforth be confined to watching from a distance, enforcement of principles for which the Congress stands"—thus said Gandhiji in the course of a lengthy statement to the Associated Press. Continuing Mahatmaji said : "If we would be truthful through and through, we should recognise that predominant part of the Congress programme has been progressively social, moral and economic. And it becomes a powerful programme because it is intimately connected with political, that is attainment of freedom of the country from the foreign yoke not from foreign friendship that is voluntary intercourse on terms of absolute equality with foreign nations. Let me also utter a warning. I hope no one will think that the Khaddar clause and the labour franchise clause do not come into immediate operation. They do. I plead guilty of negligence in that I had not in the past insisted on these things so as to make them a condition precedent to the launching out of Civil Disobedience. My retirement from the Congress may be regarded as a penance for the negligence although it was wholly unconscious. What I am aiming at is the development of the capacity for civil resistance so that there never may be any need for Civil Disobedience. Disobedience that is wholly civil should never provoke retaliation."

## NOVEMBER 1934

- 3rd. *Serious Election Fight in Lahore* :—**Violence by speech, poster and action was a feature of the electioneering activities in Lahore during the past month in con-



nection with the Assembly and municipal election. Two hostile parties of election agents and supporters had a serious clash inside the Sherdanwala Gate resulting in grievous injuries to two persons of one party. Both were removed to hospital where the condition of one was said to be precarious. Knives, sticks and bricks were said to have been freely used in this fight, which was only terminated by the arrival of the police party, who rushed from Kotwali thana and arrested three men. There had been numerous cases in the past month of assaults attended with grievous injuries leading to the issue of security proceeding against fifty persons including some candidates and in one case a candidate and his supporters stood charged under section 307 I. P. C. for alleged attempted murder of a rival candidate in a street fight.

*Madras Women's Conference* :—The annual conference of the Madras constituency of the All-India Women's Conference was held at the Senate House, with Dr. S. Muthulakshmi Reddi presiding. After the annual report and accounts of the association were presented, the president addressed the gathering. Resolutions were then discussed and passed. The conference opined that the Sarda Act should be so amended as to render its working more effective. A resolution, calling on the public to co-operate with the Cinema Censor Board by drawing the attention of the Commissioner of Police to any objectionable film or poster and by helping to create public opinion in favour of better films, was next passed unanimously. The conference supported the demands made by All-India Women's Conference for the appointment of a Commissioner to enquire into the legal disabilities of women. The other resolutions urged the extension of compulsory primary education for girls, removal of untouchability and wider public sympathy and support for all the rescue work undertaken to reclaim the victims of immoral traffic.

**7th. Congress and Indian States** :—Babu Rajendra Prasad, the Congress President issued the following statement regarding the attitude of the Congress towards the Indian States :—"Questions have been raised regarding the attitude of the Congress towards the Indian States. The Congress attitude was defined at the Calcutta session in 1928. No occasion has arisen since then to make any pronouncement on the Congress attitude. Therefore the Calcutta resolution must be taken as the Congress policy. The resolution ran as follows : 'This Congress urges on the Ruling Princes in the Indian States to introduce responsible Government based on representative institution in the States and immediately issue proclamations or enact laws guaranteeing elementary and fundamental rights of citizenship, such as rights of association, free speech, free press and security of person and property. The Congress further assures the people of the Indian States its sympathy with and support to their legitimate and peaceful struggle for the attainment of full responsible government in the States.' My attention has also been drawn to the circular of the Travancore Government in which responsible leaders are supposed to have disapproved of Congressmen in Indian States forming Congress Committees. So far as I am aware no responsible Congress leader has expressed such an opinion. On the contrary, there will be surprise in Congress circles if Congress activities, especially of the constructive nature not inconsistent with the laws of the State in which committees to be formed, were prohibited. The traditional attitude of the Congress has been one of friendliness towards the Indian States and non-interference with their administration and it is but meet to expect reciprocity from the States."

**11th. "Anti-War Day". in Bombay** :—Bombay Congress Socialists celebrated the "Anti-war Day". A public meeting was held under Mr. Jaiprakash Narain, General Secretary of the Socialist Party, presiding. Speakers appealed to the Congress to resist India being drawn into any European War.

*Punjab Socialists Condemn Congress* :—The Punjab Congress Socialist Party, at its meeting held in Lahore, condemned the Congress programme of Council entry and village reconstruction. Lalā Broz Chand, Managing Director, Bandemataram and "People" presided. The meeting passed a resolution condemning war and declaring that wars undertaken in the interests of a handful of capitalists should not be supported.

- 18th. Andhra Women's Conference :—**The eighth session of the Andhra Women's Conference was held at Madanapalle under the presidency of Srimathi G. Durgabai. The president pleaded for equality of rights for women in the matter of inheritance and divorce. In conclusion the president said that the social needs of India, the economic uplift and the educational advance of the Indian masses were inextricably mixed up with the political status of the country. Resolutions were passed requesting the Government and local bodies to encourage vocational education and urging the need for a separate Women's College in Andhra Desa.
- 20th. Debate on King's Address : Mr. Lansbury Warns Churchill :—**In the House of Commons during the debate on the King's address, Mr. Lansbury briefly referred to India and said that no settlement could be permanent unless accepted by vocal Indian opinion. He anticipated lively debates in which Mr. Churchill would be blasting the Government but warned Mr. Churchill not to expect the Opposition to help him. "We shall not vote for any diehards. We shall try to amend the Bill whichever direction we think best, but shall not assist anyone injuring the smallest advance along the road to Indian self-government". He declared that the Indian question transcended everything else in the life of British Commonwealth and if Britain was able to give India the real self-government it would be the biggest achievement of any imperial power ever known.
- 22nd. Report of the Joint Select Committee on Indian Reforms :—**The Report of the Joint Select Committee on constitutional reforms in India to the Parliament was released for publication both in India and England to-day. The following is an abstract of the main recommendations :—1. Provincial autonomy should be the basis of the reforms. 2. Safeguards are essential for the establishment of constitutional reform. 3. There should be safeguards for the administration of Law and Order. The principle of executive independence should be reinforced in the constitution by the conferment of special powers and responsibilities on the Governor as the head of the Provincial Executive. The safeguards represent a substantial power fully endorsed by law. 4. Federation at the centre. The interval between Provincial Autonomy and the inauguration of Federation should not be longer than necessary for administrative considerations. The Committee held that the existing Central Legislature should be kept during the transitional period. 5. Federation should eventually include the Indian States also. 6. Sind and Orissa will be created new provinces. 7. Regarding Provincial franchise, the White Paper proposals are accepted. There will also be no changes in proposals on Provincial Legislatures, except that there should be Upper Houses in Bengal, Madras, U. P. and Bihar. 8. The Communal Award and the Poona Pact stand. The number of seats reserved for the Depressed classes can, however, be reduced by agreement, with good effect. 9. There can be no Federation until Rulers of States representing no less than half the total population of the States and entitled to half the total seats in the Federal Upper Chamber are prepared to enter it. 10. The Governor-General with three Counsellors will administer Defence, External Affairs, Church and British Baluchistan. The other departments will be administered with the help of Ministers, subject to "special responsibilities", generally similar to those in Provinces. 11. Representation on the Federal Legislature will be by indirect election. 12. The Secretary of State will continue to recruit members to the Civil Service and Police Service. The other services will be provincial. 13. A Federal Court should be constituted. 14. The Governor-General will have the special responsibility of preventing measures, legislative or administrative, which would subject British goods, imported into India from the United Kingdom, to discriminatory or penal treatment. 15. The proposal for a declaration of Fundamental rights is rejected. 16. The India Council in England would be unnecessary. But the Secretary of State should have a small body to advise him on certain matters.
- 23rd. Malabar Co-operative Conference :—**A plea for the establishment of land mortgage banks in the district, to encourage cottage industries by starting village rural societies and to revive the dyeing industry was put forth at the

Malabar District Co-operative Conference held at Calicut under the presidentship of Mr. G. K. Devadhar. In the West, the President said, people borrowed money for production of wealth and they had understood properly how to use it. But in India people were using 75 per cent of borrowed money for unproductive purposes. The president urged the establishment of a sound land mortgage bank for the district of Malabar in order to give relief to the indebted agriculturists. He appealed, in conclusion, to co-operators to interest students and women and ask them to start co-operative societies and take more intelligent and active part in the spread of the co-operative movement in the district.

**25th. Premier on Indian Reforms :—**During the debate on the King's address, in the House of Commons, the Prime Minister, Mr. Ramsay Mac-Donald, reminded the House that the Indian situation had been steadily maturing on account of education and the political example Britain had given India. It would be sheer folly, the Premier added to believe that Britain's policy and pledges would never mature. Mr. George Lansbury, Leader of the Opposition, said that no settlement could be permanent unless accepted by the Indian opinion. "It is most unlikely that we shall reject or even substantially change recommendations with such a weight of authority behind them", declared Mr. Neville Chamberlain, Chancellor of the Exchequer in a speech at Birmingham. The general impression in Parliamentary circles was, it was stated, that the Government Bill based on the proposal was assured of an overwhelming majority in the commons.

**Death of Mr. B. N. Sasmal :—**Mr. B. N. Sasmal who was recently elected to the Assembly on the Nationalist ticket died in Calcutta to-day. He was a Barrister and a prominent public man. He first came into prominence as the lieutenant of Mr. C. R. Das, Mr. Sasmal was lying seriously ill since the election. Tributes were paid to his services by many leaders including Babu Rajendra Prasad, President of the Congress.

**Salem District Political Conference :—**The Salem District Political Conference was held at Salem under the presidentship of Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chettiar, Mr. K. V. Venkatachala Reddiar, the Chairman of the Reception Committee, said that Salem had done its duty well in the Assembly elections and he urged the carrying on of the constructive programme of the Congress. The conference was opened by Mr. S. Satyamurti. Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chettiar then delivered his address, in the course of which he referred to the new policy of the Congress. He said that the rejection of the White Paper was the main issue of the recent election and the great majority secured by the Congress was proof positive of the fact that the country did not want the White Paper scheme of reforms. The Joint Committee Report, the president said, was a cruel hoax and hoped that Parliament would not ignore the verdict of over 80 per cent of the electorate in the recent elections. A resolution was passed condemning the report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee. Resolutions urging people to wear khaddar and to remove untouchability were also passed.

**26th. Conference of Inspectors General of Police : The Viceroy on the Reforms Report :—**Opening the Conference of Inspectors-General of Police, at New Delhi. His Excellency Lord Willingdon announced that His Majesty's Government cordially accepted the Joint Parliamentary Committee's recommendations regarding law and order and police. They have recognised, His Excellency continued, that it would be disastrous if in any Province the police force were to be sacrificed to the exigencies of party or to appease the political supporters of a Minister. They have made special recommendations with the object of maintaining the Inspector-General as the effective head of each provincial police force in all that relates to internal organisation and discipline. His Excellency hoped that they would be satisfied that the recommendations of the Committee have strengthened the position of the police.

**30th. Bengal Governor on the Reforms :—**Speaking at the St. Andrews' Day dinner, at Calcutta, Sir John Woodhead, Acting Governor of Bengal, said that it was impossible to evolve a constitution which would meet with universal approval. So, he said, all those who desired to see India progress towards responsible Government

should put their shoulders to the wheel and do their best to ensure that the great constitutional change proceeds smoothly along the lines laid down by Parliament. His Excellency added that advocacy of the sterile policy of rejection without suggesting a constructive alternative would have only the effect of putting back the clock for many years.

## DECEMBER 1934.

**1st. Dr. Satyapal arrested :—**Dr. Satyapal, President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, was arrested on a charge of sedition and let off on bail. It was stated that the arrest was the sequel to a speech delivered recently by Dr. Satyapal at Delhi in connection with the Assembly election.

**3rd. Mr. Subhas Bose in Calcutta :—**Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose arrived at Karachi by the Dutch Air Mail in order to be by the side of his dying father, Mr. Janakinath Bose. Immediately on his arrival he was informed of his father's death. He left Karachi for Calcutta by plane. On his arrival in Calcutta, Mr. Subhas Bose was served with a restraint order directing him not to leave his residence nor address public gatherings. The order also prohibited him from interviewing visitors and not to correspond, converse or communicate or associate in any manner with anybody save the members of his family residing in the house. The order also required him to deliver unopened to the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Special Branch, Calcutta, all books or communications received by him.

**4th. Lahore-Karachi Air Service inaugurated :—**The Indian National Airways' air service between Lahore and Karachi was inaugurated by Sir Herbert Emerson, Governor of the Punjab. At a luncheon given by the Directors of the Indian National Airways, Sir H. Emerson appealed for the patronage of the public and added that the greater the success of such an enterprise, the wider would be the scope for extension. Sir Frank Noyce said that nearly a crore of rupees would be devoted in the next two or three years for the development of civil aviation. Regarding the question of subsidy for such enterprises, he said that in the present financial condition of the Government there could be no question of subsidies till the cuts in salaries and surcharges were removed.

**6th. Congress and the J. P. C. Report :—**The Congress Working Committee, sitting with the Parliamentary Board at Patna passed a resolution defining the attitude of the Congress towards the Joint Parliamentary Committee's report. The Working Committee was of opinion that the scheme should be rejected well knowing that rejection must involve the necessity of struggling under the present constitution, humiliating and intolerable it was, until it was replaced by one framed by the Constituent Assembly. The Working Committee also requested the members of the Assembly to reject the scheme and appealed to the nation to support the Congress in every step that it might decide upon to secure Purna Swaraj.

**7th. Frontier Leader arrested :—**Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Frontier Congress leader, was arrested at Wardha, when he was sitting with Gandhiji. The arrest was effected on a warrant issued by the Presidency Magistrate, Bombay, on a charge under Section 124-A, I. P. C. in connection with a speech delivered in Bombay. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan was escorted by a police officer to Bombay and was remanded to jail custody.

**Reforms Report Unacceptable: Bombay Liberals Dissatisfied :—**"It is very disappointing that none of the suggestions of importance [made in the joint memorandum of the British Indian Delegation has been accepted by the Joint



Parliamentary Committee and it is also highly regrettable that the proposal that the preamble of the constitution act should define Dominion Status as the objective has not been carried out," said a lengthy statement issued by the Western India National Liberal Association on the Joint Parliamentary Committee's report which was considered by the Council of Association, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad presiding. The statement, after criticising the various flaws in the proposals, such as, special powers of the Governors and the Governor-General, protection of service rights, commercial safeguards and the proposal to make I. C. S. men eligible for the post of Chief Justiceships of High Courts concludes with the declaration. "The Council is convinced that unless the proposals are so modified as to eliminate the above undesirable features as well as the objections that were pointed out regarding the White Paper proposals by the National Liberal Federation, the new constitution will not be acceptable to India and instead of allaying will intensify the existing political discontent in the country."

**10th. Joint Committee Report Debate in Commons :—**Immediately after questions in the House of Commons, Sir Samuel Hoare amid cheers moved :—"This House accepts the recommendations of the Select Committee as the basis of revision of the Indian constitution and considers it expedient that the Bill should be introduced on the general lines of the report." Sir Samuel Hoare recalled that a century and a half ago there was a similar debate on the report of a Joint Select Committee upon the Government of India. A member, who must have been the prototype of Mr. Churchill, had accused the committee of prejudiced and preconceived opinions. Burke, replying to the accusation, used the words : "Their conduct has been an instance of the most extraordinary perseverance and the most steady and patient assiduity that perhaps has ever occurred." Such was the strength of British Parliamentary traditions, that no better words could be used to-day to describe the Select Committee report.

**11th. Joint Committee Report debate in Commons :—**Col. J. C. Wedgwood (Labour) uttered a grave warning in the course of the Commons' debate on the Joint Committee report. He declared that the whole of India was not only opposed to the measure, but was increasingly terrified at it. Communal representation, he said, would permanently divide India. If democracy was once started on these lines there would never be democracy. Declaring that the Hindus would never accept communal representation, Col. Wedgwood said that they were increasingly terrified at the idea that "this moon for which they had been crying" and which had been put in their hands was a bomb to destroy the liberty they enjoyed as British subjects. Major Attlee's (Labour) first objection to the report was its distrust of the active political forces of India. Congress was a successful political force and it could make or break the constitution. Urging a provision for adult suffrage, Major Attlee said that the report merely relied on vested interests and did not venture on a bold course. Mr. Isaac Foot, on behalf of the Liberal opposition, said that there were three courses for Britain—abdication, domination or co-operation. He was not prepared to vote for a single safeguard unless he was satisfied that it was for India's good.

**12th. Joint Committee Report Debate in Commons : Labour Amendment Ignored :—**In the House of Commons to-day the Labour amendment was defeated by 491 votes to 49. The Government's motion accepting the recommendations of the Select Committee as the basis for the revision of the Indian Constitution and considering it expedient that a Bill should be introduced on the general lines of the Report, was passed by 410 votes to 127. The closing stages of the Commons debate were at first impressive and then dramatic, when Mr. Baldwin rose to make his final speech. All seating capacity and standing room in the members' galleries, distinguished strangers' gallery, dominions' gallery and other places were packed and there was an intense concentration on Mr. Baldwin's words. Early in Mr. Baldwin's speech came an outburst from Mr. Lansbury, which was typical of the excited House. When Mr. Baldwin intimated that he proposed chiefly to reply to the opposition from his own supporters,

Mr. Lansbury intervened, declaring that the House was not a toy caucus, and added, "Haven't we a right to ask Mr. Baldwin to reply to our amendment"? The remark was greeted with Labour cheers. The Speaker said that Mr. Baldwin must make his speech in his own way. Mr. Lansbury retorted that the House had some rights left and if Mr. Baldwin desired to meet his supporters let him meet them outside. (Labour cheers, followed by counter cheers for Mr. Baldwin). In the midst of the excitement, Sir Austen Chamberlain rose and asked if the Leader of the House was not entitled to the same courteous hearing that had been given to Mr. Lansbury. (Loud Ministerial cheers). Mr. Lansbury replied that he did not intend to allow Sir Austen Chamberlain to lecture him. Mr. Baldwin had said he was not going to speak to them but his own supporters. (Labour cheers). Mr. Baldwin reported that the honourable members opposite would not intimidate him. The ruling was for the discussion to be general, and he claimed the right of taking his own method of defending his own case. His object was to get the best possible majority for the case he had supported, because he believed that to be of great importance both to India and Britain (Ministerial cheers).

**13th. Joint Committee Report Debate in Lords :—**The Commons having finished all that could be said about the Indian reforms proposals, the debate in the House of Lords could evoke very little interest on the second day. The Archbishop of Canterbury took a prominent part, advancing the oft-repeated arguments for the safeguards, pleading that they would be on the background; shutting his eyes to the Congress victory in the Assembly election, and hoping that yet men would be found to work the constitution. But the Archbishop had the candour to declare that the time had come to discontinue the use of the misleading phrase "Dominion Status", which was capable of infinite misunderstanding, because nobody was certain whether it meant constitution or position. He, however, assured that the great all-India federation would always have increasingly within the Empire a position of honour quite as distinct and recognised as any Dominion. Announcing Labour Peers' attitude of neutrality, Lord Strabolgi had the courage to criticise various features of the Report, in which he saw little hope for the masses. He described the Communal Award as the "most hideous denial of everything in which the Labourites believe". Lord Zetland, who was another prominent speaker of the day, also still intensely disliked some aspects of the Communal Award, but recognised that it was an accomplished and irrevocable fact.

**15th. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan Sentenced :—**Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan was sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment. Holding that the speech delivered by him contained several passages which were a deliberate attempt on the part of an influential leader like him to bring the Government established by law into hatred and contempt, the Chief Presidency Magistrate of Bombay passed the above sentence on the Frontier leader. Immediately after sentence was passed, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan expressed the wish to Sirdar Vallabhbhai Patel that there should be no meeting, demonstration or hartal by way of protest against his conviction. His friends, who wanted to sympathise with him in his activities, could express that sympathy better by serving the villagers. He is also reported to have said that he had been deprived of the best opportunity of serving the peasants of Bengal where he intended to go if the prosecution had not intervened.

**16th. Madras Youth Congress :—**"If India means business, let her frame her own home-made constitution", said Dr. G. S. Arundale who presided over the special session of the Madras Youth Congress, held in the City, to discuss the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee. The Congress was of opinion that the reforms scheme was not calculated to take India towards Swaraj and that constitution to satisfy Indian aspirations must be drafted by Indians.

**17th. Associated Chambers of Commerce : H. E. the Viceroy on India's trade outlook :—**Addressing the annual conference of the Associated Chambers of Commerce at Calcutta, H. E. the Viceroy observed that the credit of India

stood higher than it had been for the past twenty years. The main cause of the improvement, according to His Excellency, was the improvement in the political condition of India. Lord Willingdon hoped that a general determination to work the reforms would result in continued revival of trade with increasing prosperity for the country.

**18th. Joint Committee Report Debate in Lords :—**In the House of Lords Lord Salisbury's amendment was defeated by 238 votes to 62, and the Government motion was agreed to. Supporting the Government motion, Lord Sankey uttered a warning to the Diehards, saying, "Do you desire India companioned by content or India disgruntled, disappointed and sullen, which will boycott your trade and endeavour to throw every obstacle in the path of the Government"? The way to bring peace in India, he said, was in giving effect to the J. P. C. recommendations. The greatest need of India as a whole was stability, his lordship continued, and in his opinion, apparently, this unity could be achieved by framing a constitution which included communal electorate. Lord Faringdon urged the declaration of Dominion Status as an objective to be included in the constitution, stating that assurances to that effect had been given by various statesmen and Governments.

**19th. The Viceroy's defence of the Reforms Report :—**Speaking at the European Association Dinner in Calcutta, H. E. Lord Willingdon put forth a vigorous defence of the Joint Committee's proposals and appealed to the people of India to accept the Report. The Viceroy refuted the charge of endeavouring to coerce, bribe and intimidate the Princes into joining the Federation. Referring to safeguards, the Viceroy said that they were not meant to be in constant use. Concluding, His Excellency appealed to all those who were interested in the reforms to work them.

**21st. Bihar Socialist Party's Programme :—**At a meeting of the Council of Action of the Bihar Socialist Party held at Patna, it was considered essential to organise the masses into Kisan sabhas and labour unions with a view to bring pressure on the powers that be for the redress of their grievances. The Council also adopted an immediate programme concerning peasants as well as labourers.

**23rd. Muslims condemn J. P. C. Proposals :—**At a meeting of the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim Conference, held at Aligarh under the presidentship of Nawab of Ohhatari, the following resolutions were passed : (1) The Committee places on record its considered opinion that the constitutional advance proposed by the Joint Parliamentary Committee is, as a whole, disappointing and falls considerably short of the aspirations of the people of India, and shows that it has been conceived in a spirit of distrust of the Indian people, and is in some respects retrograde even as compared with the White Paper. (2) The Committee regrets to find that due weight was not given by the Joint Parliamentary Committee to the recommendations made by the British Indian delegation and urges that the proposed constitution be improved in the light of the said memorandum (3) The Committee notes with satisfaction that the Communal Award has been incorporated in the J.P.C. report which, in the absence of any agreed settlement, form the only working basis of co-operation amongst communities. The committee strongly deprecates all efforts from any quarters to upset the same; (4) The Working Committee regrets that the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report does not concede the minimum demands of the community as embodied in various resolutions of the All-India Muslim Conference. (5) In view of the conditions prevailing in the country, the Working Committee is of opinion that in spite of the proposed constitution being unsatisfactory, the best course for Indians is not to reject the reforms, but to make united efforts to attain full responsible Government; (6) Resolved that a meeting of the Working Committee be called at Western Court, Delhi, for the 26th January and a meeting of the Executive Board for the 27th January to consider the Indian Reforms Bill.

**24th. Provincial Educational Conference :—**"The situation to-day is that education in India is dominated by a language which, aside from its own unique qualities and immortal achievements, has little or no affinity with the vocal physiology, the temperament, the tradition or the attitude to life of any of the peoples of India", said Dr. J. H. Cousins, in his presidential address to the 26th Provincial Educational Conference held at Anantapur. Dr. Cousins pleaded for complete vernacularisation of all India education, for universal and free mass education, introduction of art in education and the reform of the education system. The conference deplored piecemeal reform in respect of elementary education and urged on the Government the necessity for formulating and putting into action a comprehensive five-year programme for the expansion of elementary education.

**All-India Library Conference :—**The eighth All-India Public Library Conference was held at the Congress House, Madras, Kumar Mucindra Deb Rai Mahasai, President, Bengal Library Association, in the chair. The president, in his address, urged the need for making libraries social centres and turning them into popular resort for all sections of the community. In conclusion, he said that liquidation of illiteracy, cultural advancement and upliftment of the nation should be the guiding principles of the library movement. The conference resolved that for the promotion of mass education, greater attention should be paid by libraries for the acquisition of books in the vernacular, urged all local bodies to maintain public libraries and appealed to the provincial legislatures to vote liberal grants to aid the formation and maintenance of public libraries.

**27th. All India Educational Conference :—**That a beginning should be made in educational institutions to impart elementary knowledge of sex by teaching simple principles of biology and science of life was one of the recommendations of the All-India Educational Conference, held at Delhi. Resolutions were also passed requesting the educational authorities to establish arbitration boards to adjust differences between teachers and managing committees of non-Governmental institutions, urging the establishment of an All-India Institute of Education and Psychological Research and opining that vernaculars should be adopted as the media of instruction, if education in India were to become effective and popular.

**28th. Mr. Sriprakash's Presidential Address at Itawah Conference :—**"If to-day he can solve the problems of our poverty and unemployment and save us from the worse than useless things that are flooding our markets from abroad, he will have solved one of the most important problems of our unhappy lives".—Thus said Mr. Sriprakash justifying Mahatma Gandhi's retirement from Congress, in the course of his presidential address. Speaking on what the Congress stands for Mr. Sriprakash pointed to the Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens adopted at Karachi Congress and said: "We definitely stand for equitable distribution of work and wages, for a society of freedom and of love. This is not an Utopia, for we seriously mean business." And to attain that objective the speaker remarked, "We have to make the change from the old to the new as painless as possible, for all." Pointing to the landholding class, the speaker remarked, "If our large and small zemindars alike work with understanding and discretion, they will find that their real place is with us ; and their real interest lies in that better form of society in which they unfortunately scent danger, and by their opposition to which they are harming themselves." "We are not fighting against any class or any race. We are honestly fighting against a bad system ; we are no enemies of any individual or any group. We wish ill to none ; we desire the well-being of all," he said. "Even if we were a nation of multi-millionaires where there was no want and no disease, but if we were in the hands of another power and were not ruling ourselves and entirely self-dependent and responsible to ourselves in every way and for everything, we should still want Swaraj. Swaraj for us is the recovery of our lost soul and not only the finding of our lost wealth," concluded the speaker.



*The Indian Liberal Federation :—*"The constitutional proposals incorporated in the report concede the minimum of power and betray the maximum distrust of Indian legislators and ministers. The Governor-General and the Governors will be the despots of the new constitution. Our destiny will be entirely in the hands of God's Englishmen. We cannot accept such a constitution. I would advise my countrymen to ask for nothing at present but wait for better days." This bold lead was given by Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru to the members of the Liberal Party in the course of his presidential address at the sixteenth annual session of the National Liberal Federation of India at Poona. Referring to terrorism in Bengal Pandit Kunzru said: "The existence of terrorism in Bengal should not be allowed to interfere with the normal operation of provincial autonomy. The existing unrest is due largely to the dissatisfaction in the country with the present form of Government. The satisfaction of the aspirations of the people is the only way of putting an end to it. The speedy transfer of power to Indian hands is therefore urgently required in Bengal. To make the abnormal conditions that prevail there an excuse for the retention of control over essential branches of administration by the Governor would be to play into the hands of the terrorists."

**29th. All-India Women's Conference :—**The ninth session of the All-India Women's Conference was held at Karachi, Mrs. Rustomji Paridonji presiding. Dr. Maude Royden and Mrs. Corbett Ashby attended the conference on invitation. The most important work for men and women in India at present, said the president in her address, was the attainment of unity. To achieve this, she advocated the abolition of communal schools and the adoption of Hindustani as a common language. She also pleaded for complete swadeshi. The conference favoured the introduction of co-education in colleges and primary schools. The conference also urged the provision in schools and colleges of playgrounds and reiterated its demand for compulsory medical inspection with adequate provision for necessary treatment. The conference demanded the removal of legal disabilities under which Indian women were suffering and supported the village industries scheme launched by Gandhiji. The conference expressed its disapproval of the J. P. C. Report and was of opinion that the proposals were unacceptable. Birth-control was considered essential in view of the low standard of physique of women, high infant mortality and increasing poverty.

**30th. U. P. Socialists' Conference :—**Opposition to participation by India in any war in which the British Government might be involved and active resistance to utilisation of Indian men, money and resources for the purpose of such war, organisation of peasants and workers and condemnation of the action of Government in placing restrictions on Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose formed the subjects of the resolutions passed by the United Provinces Provincial Socialist Conference, held at Etawah. Seth Damodar Swaroop presided.

# **INDIA IN HOME POLITY**

## **I n t r o d u c t i o n**

**July—December 1934**



# INDIA IN HOME POLITY

JULY — DECEMBER 1934

## I. THE CONGRESS AND THE ELECTION

The Congress had abandoned civil disobedience. It had even turned away from what its late critics had been wont to call "the barren and futile path of non-cooperation" leading to the bleakest of all wildernesses—the wilderness of blasted hopes, and into the deepest of all sloughs—the slough of despond. The All India Congress Committee and the Working Committee had decided to contest the elections and "capture" the legislative bodies even before the inauguration of the new reforms. As Mr. Bhulabhai Desai, the leader of the new Swaraj Party—it called itself Parliamentary Party—observed (Bombay, Sept. 22)—There were two issues and two issues only on which the Congress was fighting the election. The first issue was this: The Government had pursued a dual policy of repression cum conciliation. It had taken measure—some of them admittedly drastic—"in the interest of law and order" to stem the tide of the "unconstitutional and subversive" Congress movement. It claimed that this aspect of its policy, though stern, had heartened and reassured the vast bulk of the law-abiding people of India which appreciated the courage and wisdom of the Government in its exhibition of firmness in a situation disfigured not only with actual lawlessness but fraught with the gravest potential menace. Both Sir Samuel Hoare and His Excellency Lord Willingdon had asserted that their policy in regard to the Congress had commended itself to all India minus a microscopic minority, and had earned its support, especially in view of the other side of their policy which showed that the Government was not going to stand still but forge ahead with its constitutional proposals and plunge the piers that should eventually support the bridge spanning the gulf that separated India from the Promised Land of Dominion Status. Now, the question was this—Had the Government really the sympathy and support of the great bulk of the Indian people in its fight against the Congress? Was the support of public opinion—the only moral and legal sanction behind the policy of any government in any country keeping up even a pretence of democratic institutions—really with the Government of India in its wrestle with the Congress?

The bare fact that Government had scored success and the Congress had suffered defeat could not by itself be converted into a proof of the popularity of the Government policy by any mere ordinance of Simla or Whitehall logic. Public opinion and public sympathy in respect of the 'unconstitutional' Congress movement had been very effectively muzzled by the official Ordinances. A person showing any sympathy with the 'anti-government' activities of the Congress had been, in the eye of Ordinance Law, not only a pariah and an untouchable



who had to be shunned, but an outlaw who had to be 'hunted down'. Government were not prepared to take any risks by allowing the Congress civil disobedience movement to gather momentum from a growing public sympathy in its favour. It tried, and successfully as the sequel proved, to stop the very sources that would feed the movement.

## II. THE BAROMETER READING

Any government functioning under a constitution would stand or fall, upon any question of vital policy or measure, in accordance with the barometer reading of the pressure of public opinion and public support. A government before launching upon a new policy or proposing a new deal would first seek the verdict of a General Election. Where the verdict cannot be taken before a new deal, it must be taken immediately after. There is no responsibility where there is no such constitutional need of an appeal to the nation.

India has no such constitution, and therefore, no responsibility and the usual constitutional guarantees of responsibility. The policy of the Government is not dependent on the vote of the legislature. And the legislature, such as it is, not bound to appeal to the country upon a question of vital policy or measure upon which the verdict of the country was not ascertained definitely in the last election.

## III. INDIAN LEGISLATURES

Indian legislative bodies have often been called 'glorified debating societies'. Though, under the existing India Act scheme, these bodies possess non-official majorities, yet the existence of the official and nominated blocks, communal representation and the play of cross interests, often artificially engineered, directed or stimulated, have, generally, made these bodies act exactly as the powers that be wish that they should act. Unfavourable and inconvenient votes have been the exception and not the rule. The entrance of the Congress Swaraj Party under the able and forceful leadership of Pandit Motilal or a C. R. Das had, it is true, made the unexpected in the annals of Indian legislative bodies happen some times. But Government had not allowed the adverse vote to upset their plans or calculations.

## IV. A HANDY AND EFFECTIVE WEAPON

The power of certification and veto, which merely adorns the crown of a constitutional king, proved, in the case of the Governor-General and Governors in India, a most handy and effective weapon not only to cut the rare gordian knot of a constitutional impasse but almost every normal tie between Officialdom and the legislators. And be it observed in this connection that, though the White Paper scheme would ostensibly make the future Indian Cabinet to some extent amenable to the control of the legislature, the power of certification, initiation and veto, under every form of euphemism, would still be retained as a very handy and effective weapon. That weapon is not going to be discarded. On the contrary, it is going to be perfected and made equal to all conceivable emergencies and proof against all possible risks. That power

is not merely to deck and adorn the ceremonial robe of the Governor-General and the Governors. The British diehard need have no fear on the score of that mighty perfected weapon being allowed to lie rusty in the armoury of the powers that be.

However that be, the only inconvenience—if inconvenience it be—which the adverse vote during the Swarajist days in the legislature caused to the bureaucracy was this that it deprived them of their fond delusion of a cheap delight in proclaiming to the world that in all their measures, even in those perversely called reactionary or repressive, they had the backing of their constituted legislatures. Thus the so-called Ordinance Laws had been passed with the consent of the legislatures. The Ottawa Agreement and many other matters of moment, decried by the so-called Nationalist Press and Platform, had the assent of the Assembly given to them.

### V. A DELUSION AND SNARE

Now, constituted as the Assembly had been, the joy of an official victory in it could only have been a delusion that had deluded New Delhi and Simla, and the delight of proclaiming such victory to the world could only have been a snare that had trapped the wits of the Olympic gods. All India knew, the legislators themselves and Government knew, and all the world that kept itself intelligently informed about the actual state of things in India knew that the Indian legislatures, especially after the exit of the Swarajist members, had ceased to reflect real Indian opinion both in volume and intensity and in composition and proportion. Vitally, they had ceased to be parts of the Indian body politic. Many would call them parasitic growths which, far from serving any useful purpose in the vital economy of Indian national life and well-being, had been, as obnoxious and malignant formations, poisoning the very blood-stream of the body politic.

### VI. DE FACTO RESPONSIBILITY

Even the most enthusiastic supporter of the existing legislative machinery would not venture to claim for its actual working and actual results during the last few years anything more than a purely negative value. "Poor legislators ! Of what avail would their vote be in the teeth of Official determination ! Government could surely not be moved by so much as a hair's breadth from their position by the carrying of an adverse vote against them in the Assembly." True ; still the adverse vote, when the situation demanded it and public opinion was unmistakably clear and categorical about it, should have pricked the fond bureaucratic bubble of the legislative backing for all official acts of commission and, omission, and shown the utter hollowness of the plea that though India had not yet been granted *de jure* responsible government, she had been in virtual enjoyment of *de facto* responsibility.

### VII. INTERNATIONAL LINKING : AN EXAMPLE

A legislature, not reflecting the true public mind and not developing a real opposition to the party ( though irremovable ) holding office, is not merely a *tamasha* to be innocently enjoyed, but a misfor-

tune to be deeply deplored. In the first place, its bearings being false with its own country, it tends to make the bearings of its country false with the rest of the world. And in these days of international linking and cooperation, a country with her bearings false or uncertain cannot be expected to get on well into line with the world :forces of democracy, social well-being and economic justice. The League of Nations has not indeed been an instrument of much practical moment so far ; still it is an Idea for which the last Great War was supposed to have been fought, and the Idea alone was its sole justification and achievement. India has been one of the original members of the League—a circumstance that has not indeed ushered the millennium in India—yet it was, has been, and will be a kind of link that should be deemed as well worth preserving and strengthening. We are not yet strong enough to dispense with it like Japan or Germany on ultimatums or otherwise. In some cases, e. g., as regards the vexed question of the Communal Award, some of our leaders, particularly those of the Hindu Mahasabha, have urged that, failing an agreed solution of the Communal tangle at the R. T. C., it would have been wiser for the Indian statesmen concerned to have appealed to the collective wisdom of the international machinery of the League and abided by its solution of the Minorities problem. Instead of doing it, some of them formed what was known as the Minorities Pact with the result that the British Premiers' arbitration, with all its humiliation and anti-national reactions, was "plotted and forged" into being rather than naturally brought about.

#### VIII. EXPLOITING THE MAYA

In the second place, a country's legislature, devoid of reality, spells no good to its government or to its people. Governments learn the art of responsible and sound administration only in the hard school of genuine opposition zealously maintained against them in the legislatures and in the country. Where there is no opposition or where there is but only a mockery of it, they get into a habit of thinking too much of themselves and arrogating too much to themselves. The Government become the State. What they think the State thinks. What they will the state wills. The automania grows upon them. There is but one voice which the Chamber echoes and one act which it rehearses. Possibly, Governments themselves are at first alive to and enjoy the unreality and mockery of the arrangement by which they alone are called upon to play their parts while others are to go through an aping programme of variegated pantomime. But governments get used to this, and begin to auto-suggest themselves that their aping puppets are their "responsible" supporters and cooperators, and that they are doing the job with the help of them. The unreal becomes real. This is *Maya*. Themselves duped by the unreality of their so-called constitutional partners, they may also, when occasion should demand it, dupe others—a gullible world public for instance—by exploiting the *maya* of their constitutions working happily and harmoniously as a team. It is said that the days of democracy are gone. This seems to be very nearly true. And if it is true, it is because both the present day "superman" dictators and their modern docile flock have allowed themselves to be

dupes. The occupation of both will be gone in a world declining to be exploited, morally and materially.

#### IX. SHOP-WINDOW DEMOCRACY

Now, the exit of the Congress Party from the legislature had made the process above described far too easy for the parties concerned. The arrangement was perhaps more prejudicial to the Government than to the people. The pro-Government vote in the Assembly, coming easily and conveniently one after another, served not only as a mask to hide the naked irresponsibility of the present order of dispensation in India, but flung over it a decent and decorous cloak of a kind of shop-window doll democracy. Even a doll decently dressed up and exhibited at the window will, occasionally, deceive the unwary passer-by. Not only the outside world but some people in India itself may be deluded into thinking that the appearance may be reality or at least an earnest of reality, that the doll democracy may be democracy in actual flesh and blood. Those who are responsible for the exhibition will also find it a most convenient arrangement not only to keep their old customers but to attract new. These are days in which even autocratic governments have to put on velvet gloves over their mailed fists and hurl their thunder-bolt concealed in a flower bouquet.

#### X. BACK TO NATURE MOVEMENT

There are indications of a Back to Nature movement all over the civilised world. By this, it is expected, civilisation will take off much of its veneer and paint, and the good old brute and the savage which has so long been in hiding will come out and be its good old natural self again. The process has already begun in right earnest in directions of least resistance—morals and manners. The nudist movement, for example, has been moving with such rapid strides that old-fashioned decency and decorum have been standing at their door-steps with averted faces and their hands up in dismay. But this Back to Nature process does not yet appear to have made much headway in statecraft and some other spheres of human corporate relationships. In savage life the war paint is put on to make the savage look a more terrible savage. But modern States are putting it on to make them look angels of peace and human fellowship. Their bombing planes are made to look, as nearly as possible, like doves flying direct from the Kingdom which is in Heaven to the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. The most autocratic slave-owner and slave-driver will pose as the wisest and kindest shepherd looking after and tending his flock which, left much to itself, will, oftner than not, stray into the dirty and dangerous ditch. It was Huxley who said that Evolution had made the wolf—the natural enemy of the lamb and sheep—the faithful guardian of the flock. But history, so far, seems to have produced no such happy transformation of the wolf of autocracy lying singly in wait or hunting closely in packs. But it has undoubtedly taught it new devices to change its skin suitably to the complexion of its environment or to alter its aspect agreeably to the character of the actual conditions. And one of its devious devices is to put on the colour and assume the character of the environment in which it may find itself for the moment without, however, ceasing in reality

to be the natural wolf lying in wait or hunting in packs. Thus autocracy now-a-days takes on the colour of democracy, fascism or even that of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is safer and more convenient to take it on than to go about in its natural colours. Simulation is an almost indispensable aid in modern offence and defence. The Nazi movement must be able to persuade itself that it has behind it the backing of 90 p. c. of the people of the Fatherland. So Fascism in Italy and so also Bolshevism in Russia. The world seems to be ruled by powerful individuals or coteries, but such rule still requires to be camouflaged in one form or other as rule by the people and for the people. The ancients seemed to be able to manage their affairs without having recourse to some of the modern camouflage. If they should put on the war paint, they would do so to appear war-like. If one country went to war against another, it did so at the bidding of one man who was its despotic ruler—whether king or dictator. The war was seldom fought in the name of the people. Modern wars are supposed to be largely engineered by greedy and unscrupulous munition-makers and other gangs of war-profiters. Sinister and very selfish interests are believed to have a more complete control of the international chess-board both in diplomacy and in war than interests that are wider and more vital. It has been doubted if nations left to themselves will ever fight. Of course, individuals and groups of individuals will. But nations are never left to themselves and they never were. They have been in leading strings. Those who have held and controlled the strings have called themselves by various names—priest, prophet, king, hero, plutocrat, president, chancellor, dictator, minister. But whatever the names, the thing itself seems to have persisted through the ages. Crowds of all ages have been ruled by crowd psychology, and herds have ever followed the morale of the flock. Those who have driven the crowd or led the flock have also assiduously learnt their craft. The essence of the craft has been to gain mastery over the psychology of the crowd and control of the morale of the herd.

## XI. BANK OF PUBLIC OPINION

The above is true even of governments that call themselves democratic. India is not a democracy. Yet some of her institutions bear the complexion of genuine democratic institutions without bearing the character of them. Her legislatures, devoid of responsibility, are also devoid of the essence of representative institutions. But this latter defect is often conveniently forgotten. The Indian franchise is restricted, but within the bounds of this restricted franchise, the Indian legislatures are sometimes taken as representing the actual configuration of intelligent and articulate Indian public opinion. But everybody knows, and Government know too, though they would sometimes conveniently forget it and would have us forget it, that, in so far as the representative worth of the Assembly and the Councils are concerned, their face value may be, oftener than not, no reliable index of their actual credit in the Bank of Public Opinion. Though these bodies possess non-official majorities, the nominated blocks in them, both official and non-official, are still factors of sufficient, often compelling, weight to incline the balance of legislative



vote almost invariably and inevitably to one side only, especially in view of the fact that good care has been taken to so sort and pack the elected members into tight and mutually unaccommodating parcels, with labels affixed of all sorts of narrow communal and other special interests, each jealous of pulling its own weight but regardless of whether or not they should pool their resources together for the purpose of serving the common national interest. In plain words, the elections are not allowed under the existing arrangement to be held on a common broad national basis. Truly nationalistic forces cannot, in any numbers, scale the walls that have been erected and which still stand. The so-called Nationalist Party is, more often than not, a Moderate Party commanding but little influence inside the Chambers, and even less outside. The real "live" nationalists—the progressive sections of them, e. g., the defunct Swaraj Party under the leadership of Pandit Motilal, or the present Congress Parliamentary Party under the leadership of Mr. Bhulabhai Desai—have, of course, been factors disturbing both the ethereal equanimity of the Olympus and the smooth even tenor of a life of mutual admiration and accommodation in the Legislative Elysium below.

## XII. THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

In the present Assembly, for instance, out of a total of 41 nominated (official and non-official) and 104 elected members, the Congress Parliamentary Party together with the Congress Nationalist Party form a minority representing a little over one third of the strength of the whole House. It is true that it has been able to drive the Government to very uncomfortably tight corners by some of its steam-roller majorities. But since under the existing arrangement the wrestles on the floor of the House are more spectacular than real, Government have not felt seriously hard put to it to devise a way to wriggle out of their mock defeat without having to sacrifice so much as a ribbon from their robe of office or a feather from their cap of authority. And how has the Swaraj Party or the Parliamentary Party managed to corner the "adversary" in all this mock fight? Not surely by its own power functioning in single blessedness. It has won by making what the Nationalist Press has sometimes characterised as questionable alliances. "Neither accept nor reject policy" of the Congress with respect to the Communal Award has been, by some, set down as the price paid by the Congress to buy the support of "the decisive element" in the Assembly—the Party captained by Mr. M. A. Jinnah. It is the "understanding" with this decisive factor in the Assembly that has presumably stayed the hand of the Congress Party which, in ample strength and left to itself, would, probably, finish the J. P. C. R. with a single stroke of adverse vote, sure and swift. We say "probably", because Congress "at war" is not exactly the same thing as Congress "in opposition". Congress at war claimed—though Mahatmaji himself was not prepared to fully endorse the claim—that it was showing a perfectly clean and open fight. But Congress playing the game of "obstruction" in the Assembly has not claimed—and nobody outside the utopia would expect it to—that it has or is going to place "all its cards" on the table. The game is a trial

of strength not in field operations ; it is a game of diplomacy and negotiation *in part* also. What else it is we do not now aver. Seated at the game table—with some of its trump cards probably up its sleeve—it cannot help as regards some matters of moment “biding its time”. The question, for instance, whether Congress should accept office under the new constitution, is one which it is not going to answer straight-away. “Let us wait and see”.

### XIII. COMMUNAL ZID

We concede, therefore, that there is no sin, even for the Congress Party, in making alliances with other parties in the legislature—alliances which are “demonstrably in the interest of India”. What alliances are and what are not so, is, of course, a point to be debated. The Hindu Mahasabha school of thought has, for instance, taken exception to some of the policies and practices of the Congress in relation to the question of Hindu-Moslem *entente*. It is generally opposed to the policy of the “blank cheque”, and week-kneed submissions of the major community to the narrow, anti-national communal zid of the minorities. It would make the edifice of Hindu Moslem federation rest broad-based upon the natural bed-rock foundations of the native strength of both, upon mutual respect and upon a mutual recognition of their community of vital interests as Indians. It will refuse to build upon sands and gravel. We have to build earthquake-proof structures not only in Behar where the Hindu predominates, but also in Beluchistan where the Moslem is the dominant factor. Structures that are not strong enough and safe enough to withstand the crash of “earthquakes” are no good either in Behar or in Beluchistan or even in cosmopolitan Calcutta, Bombay or New Delhi. Such structures require materials of sure and tried strength : they cannot be built with hastily improvised, flimsy confabulation stuff.

### XIV. PACTS AND ALLIANCES

However that be, we need not turn down pacts and alliances simply because they are called by these names. They may be good or bad. And in every case we have to assure ourselves that they are really good before we ratify them. The whole history of the Indian Communal question has been big with pacts some of which have proved abortive. Some have begun small as the seed of an oak and speedily grown not only into greatness but fruitfulness. Whether the fruit has been the proverbial apple of discord or a poisonous fruit is another matter. The Lucknow Pact did not prove—at least in itself—quite so mischievous as some of the latter pacts patched up in a fickle time-serving spirit. Yet the Lucknow Pact was the first link in a concatenation of events which have naturally and almost inevitably led up to the present predicament. There we sowed the wind, and we are reaping the whirlwind, proving day by day more and more sweeping and uncontrollable. The present communal tornado seems to have had its centre of origin in London known as the Minorities Pact. Gods breathed into the troubled waters of unsettled and, from the very nature of the case, unseizable communal differences, and, lo! the centre of a storm that was to burst over the continent of India, involving only God knows how many generations of hapless Hindus, Mussalmans,

Sikhs and Christians in the wreck of its havoc, was conjured into being. The Whitehall bark finding itself or fearing to find itself becalmed in a sea of Indian communal placidity could now ride the storm and move merrily and proudly on to its haven. The Congress, of course, does not at heart love communalism. But it says it cannot escape from a precedent created by itself—the Lucknow Pact. Royal Commissions, Government Despatches and Parliamentary Committees have not failed to use that Pact to nail nationalist India to the counter. It is a *Karma* the fruit of which shall be entailed upon seven generations to come and seven generations that went before. But we shall come back to this question.

### XV. A COSTLY LUXURY

Now, with allies at their back, if not by themselves, the nationalist elements, progressives and moderates, can, undoubtedly, make, the position of the "irresponsible" Indian Executive uncomfortable in the legislature. Without them, the Government is assured an easy walk over. It is a cheap luxury which the Indian bureaucracy has long been wont to afford. The nationalist team with their allies will make it a dear, costly luxury. Of course this will not materially change the current coin in Indian politics. It will not usher gold currency in terms of responsibility. But it will at least prick the bubble of an unreal and inflated currency. The base metal may no longer pass for gold, and all that glitters may not seem gold. Votes in the Assembly will be what votes in the democratic countries usually are—they will, indeed, be not binding on the Government, but they will also not be aiding the Government where no aid is really meant. Votes can no longer be "used" or "exploited" for imperialistic purposes.

### XVI. THE TEST

The entry of the Congress Party as a factor in the Indian Legislature will, therefore, serve more than one purpose. In the first place it will prove that the Congress, by its late fight with the Government, has not fallen in the estimation of peoples who interest themselves in and vote for elections to the constituted Indian legislative bodies; that though out of favour with the Government and under its ban, it has not been out of favour with the public. And a fair test as to whether it is really so or not so, is to lift the ban and make not only Congress organisations legal but practical manifestations of public sympathy and support in respect of them valid. It is no argument to gag the expression of public opinion, vocal or otherwise, and say that the Congress has no support. Allow freedom of speech and association, and *then* see whether you win or the Congress wins or any other party. The Congress resolved to contest (not as a whole of course but through one of its limbs—the Parliamentary Board) the elections so that it might apply the above test.

### XVII. THE MAIN CURRENT OF PUBLIC OPINION

In the second place, the Officialdom in India, as also their superiors and supporters "at home", have often made light of Indian public opinion on the ground that in this country there is not one public



opinion, but fifty, and have, accordingly, acted according to *their own* opinion, since they cannot be expected to act according to fifty. All governments, not excepting those that call themselves democratic, act according to their own opinion. When they cannot, they clear out. But all governments, before they accept office and so long as they continue to hold it, make sure that their opinion is, in the main, the public opinion of the country they rule. There are fifty public opinions in any country on matters of public moment. These tend to organise and pool themselves. Governments are moved and propelled by what turns out to be the main current. It is, as we have before seen, included in the modern art of governance to create, engineer and maintain the "main current" by all kinds of modern devices of mass mesmerism of which Herr Hitler, for example, seems to be so consummate a master. The main current moves the government merrily on. But let us not talk of other countries. India is a land of diversity of races, religions, creeds and languages. It is also a land of diversity of opinions. These have not, probably as yet, pooled themselves into a "main current". Governments have not so far got to depend upon a current of Indian political opinion to move. They have, of course, the deep and fairly well-charted waters of Indian loyalty and co-operation to make them float. But their propellers are British-made. Very strong and powerful propellers they have proved. But though the Government has not got to depend on an Indian current, main or minor, in ploughing Indian waters, a current, which looks like being the main in the long and short run if it is not the main already, seems to have developed in the bosom of the still stagnant waters, and is coming to the surface. And it is more likely than not that this deep-origin main surface current will more and more completely identify itself with the Indian Urge for self-determination and self-expression.

#### XVIII. THE INDIAN URGE

Whether this Urge will continue to be, as it is now is, the Indian National Congress Movement, is a matter which is still in the womb of the future. There are other tendencies, of a more or less revolutionary nature, some actually violent, others perhaps as yet only potentially so, already in the field. The Violence Party have, generally speaking, kept outside the Congress. But the Socialist Party—which some believe to be the party of the future—have been digging their trenches inside the Congress citadel. If the Congress fail to join them and accept their terms, there is some likelihood that the trenches, which they have been digging, may ultimately be its grave. The history of Indian liberalism and moderatism is the history of such aggressive trenches which ultimately proved to be pits for a decent burial. Then there is the Sanatanist lion, still snoring, of whom we spoke in our last Introduction. We have been, of late, attempting nasal feeding of this immortal Kumbhakarna by legislative and other means. These, so far, have tickled but not roused the sleeping lion. But when he is roused—and roused he will be—woe betide those who dare beard the lion in his den. Those who fondly imagine that, under the existing world conditions, the present spell of torpor of the lion will deepen into

the coma of death, are mistaken. The world conditions are changing more catastrophically than one may be commonly pleased to imagine. The master rulers—Hitler and Mussolini—have already cried halt to the progressive feminist movement all over the civilised world and turned it back to old-world ideals of the kitchen and motherhood. This is only typical of some other revolutionary “set-backs” in other directions. The sleeping Indian lion may, therefore, be only biding his time. It is not a safe and easy prophecy to say that *this* particular Party and *not that* is the party of the future.

But apart from prophecy or prevision, there is no gainsaying the fact that a current, which promises to be the main, has already appeared on the surface of Indian affairs, having its origin in the sullen, simmering depths. The current, in so far as it is in evidence and in function, has not spared the “dumb millions” for whom the die-hard sheds such tons of “crocodile tears”, and it is a matter for certainty and not merely a question of probability that, as time passes, the masses will be more and more rather than less and less drawn into and swept by the current of the Indian Urge for self-determination and self-expression. We do not say that the Urge has already developed “full steam” or that it has been in perfect order and running on solid, safe, permanent lines.

### XIX. THE EGYPTIAN STORY

It is idle and futile, therefore, to talk of the fifty or five hundred fifty public opinions in India, and leave the matter at that. You leave the matter at that because the fifty or five hundred fifty public opinions in India do not for you matter as yet. You know that the caravan will be moving though the dogs, in one or several packs, may be barking. Besides, has not the retiring Great Moghul—Sir Samuel Hoare—told us that our so called stiff attitude in relation to the proposed reforms is a mere pose? Sir Samuel loves telling stories. The story of the caravan had scandalised us, but did it not prove a good stomachic after all? We were made to swallow the bitter pill so that we might, when the time should come, fall to the reforms dished out to us with greater appetite and relish. But he has now left us “with a good parting kick”. He has told the story of a petition once submitted to Lord Cromer in Egypt. The petition had asked for a complete evacuation of the British from that country. Running his eyes casually over the list of the signatories, Lord Cromer stumbled upon a particular name—that of an old Sheik who had been known to be a good friend and ally of the British. How is this?—he enquired of the old Sheik. The old Sheik smiled and took his lordship into his confidence. “My Lord”, he said, “when I happen to be out of humour I call curses upon my poor horse or camel. But I know full well that words break no bones, and the curses will not touch a hair of the faithful beast.” So Indian politicians have been calling curses on the devoted head of the Bill knowing that it will not be injured but will come alright as a badly needed and much-prized boon.

Now, the Congress contested the elections with a view to exposing the high imperialist fallacies and pretences such as "India is not grown up enough to form a public opinion", "one has to deal with not one but fifty public opinions in India", "opinion may be hollow and insincere and so need not at all be seriously considered even when it seems to be united and vocal—it may all be sound and fury signifying nothing".

## XX. THE FIRST ISSUE

We have now at some length put the case of the Congress as regards the first issue raised by Mr. Bhulabhai Desai. Hartals, flag-hoistings, processions, boycott, and the courting of imprisonment had been, in one aspect or other, unconstitutional in the eyes of the authorities. So they were not prepared to accept these as proving a test of the actual popularity of the Congress as compared with that of other elements, official or non-official, that had been opposed to it. But elections are a perfectly valid test. There can be no denying it. Now the Congress proposes to appeal to this test. If it wins—and it has won by actually sweeping the polls in many cases—it proves its claim as the popular party representing the major current of thought in the politically-minded India.

## XXI. THE GROUND UNCERTAIN

It will enter the Legislature as the largest single party. Yet, under the existing arrangement, the largest single factor, including anything between 50 to 60 members, is still a permanent minority in a House of nearly 150 members. It can inflict defeats on Government only by joining hands with some other factors. This makes the ground slippery and uncertain under its feet. The lobby situation becomes perennially one of suspense and intrigue. One is never certain of his move and the result it will bring to. Victory at any cost being the end, parties will feel tempted to compromise themselves rather than give quarters to their common adversary.

## XXII. IRRESPONSIBILITY

But suppose you are enabled to inflict a defeat or a series of defeats on your-common adversary. By that you make the luxury of an easy walk-over on unpopular bills or measures a costly and rare luxury for the authorities. You refuse helping them to keep up the illusion that all such measures have been taken not only for the good of India but also with her consent. This will not of course check "irresponsibility" but it may make it cautious or even apologetic. Smarting under a sense of defeat accumulated, your adversary may even fling back to your face the charge of irresponsibility that you have so persistently and unceremoniously laid at his door. You may be accused of offering only destructive criticism, opposing for the sheer joy of it, because you lack responsibility and have not to reap in the actual field of day to day administration the harvest of the seeds you sow in the four winds of the Chamber.

## XXIII. THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP SEA

Of course nothing succeeds like success, and nothing is more responsible than responsibility. Sir Samuel Hoare had X-rayed and located the organic trouble of the Indian body politic before he said that what India wanted most to make her healthy was a constitution responsible to her, that is, one she could call her own. Under the existing constitutions, though some subjects have been "transferred" in the provinces, the ministers, who have been placed in charge of them, have found themselves between the proverbial devil and the deep sea in the discharge of their so-called responsibilities. Not usually being the leaders of the major party or parties in the House, and their appointment and tenure of office being dependent on the Governor's pleasure, they initiate policies and adopt measures for which not they but the Reserved side of the Government have to find money, which, however, they cannot often do after meeting their own insistent and growing needs. So the nation-building subjects (as they have been called) only plan and design but never build. Many schemes of urgent public usefulness relating to mass education, sanitation, irrigation etc. are very good on paper, and some of them even adorn the Statute Book, but they are still in their astral bodies, and actual or even prospective budgetary conditions do not permit or promise their materialisation. The ministers have, therefore, been talkie pictures who talk perhaps a little too much but act very little. Whilst some of them seem to have learnt the art how to insinuate themselves into the good graces of the powers that be, not many of them can show much to their credit which will recommend them to public approbation. Yet, under the constitution as it is, the public can, if they so mind, make the situation too hot for the ministers through their elected representatives. By an adverse vote on their supplies and salaries, the members can, provided they form the majority, make the position of the ministers untenable. In at least two of the Provinces, viz., Bengal and the Central Provinces, dyarchy was for a time given a decent (?) burial by the then dominant Swarajist Party. But dyarchy had its resurrection because the dominant party either withdrew or was disintegrated. The Congress Party would have repeated the experiment in the Councils had it stayed on instead of walking out; or else, had the Councils also dissolved—as was the Assembly—making it possible for the Congress Party to come back stouter than ever. The provincial game cannot, of course, be played in the Assembly where the rules are different. There is no dyarchy to bury, decently or otherwise, in the Central Government. Still there is the ghost of a false appearance to lay. It is irresponsibility masquerading as responsibility—Simla or Whitehall mandate appearing in the garb of Indian legislative consent. The Congress has been out to dispel this delusion.

## XXIV. THE POLICY OF THE COUNCIL-ENTRY

Though we have long lingered over the question of the desirability or otherwise of the Council-entry programme readopted by the Congress but allowed to fall into disuse for some years in favour of a

more "fighting" programme of direct action (non-cooperation and civil disobedience), we have refrained from launching upon anything like a discussion of the entire question of Council-entry, under existing or prospective conditions, as a measure calculated to really pave the way for India's political advance. Opinion inside the Congress as also opinion outside has always been divided on the issue. There were changers and no-changers in the aftermath of the Non-Cooperation Movement during the early twenties. And there has been this cleavage in the Congress attitude and outlook in the early thirties also—latent and hardly visible so long as the Movement was going strong, but more and more patent and pronounced as the Movement gradually shrank and retreated. As we have seen, the Congress as a whole never adopted Council-entry as its programme. But it permitted—through the Working Committee and the A. I. C. C. at first, and then by calling a special session of itself (in Bombay in October)—those of its members who believed in the utility and efficacy of the legislative programme to form themselves into a Parliamentary Party and fight the elections and enter the legislatures in the name of the Congress but subject to the superintendence and control of the A. I. C. C.

#### XXV. THE OTHER ISSUE : SELF-DETERMINATION

But the Council programme of the Congress has been inspired by another motive. The Congress appeal to the electorate involved two issues. First, has it the backing of the country in its fight for freedom? Secondly, the Congress has claimed the right of self-determination in the shaping of India's political destiny, and has, accordingly, never been agreeable to the British imposition of a constitution on India. It has been on principle opposed to the method of the White Paper or the J. P. C. R. scheme of Indian reform. The R. T. C. episode, though it included for a time the dramatic entry and exit of Mahatma Gandhi, did not, in the opinion of the Congress, at all alter the situation. The Indian cooperation offered or "secured" at the Round-Table in London was devoid of any real significance and value. The White Paper scheme was supposed to have been based on the so-called agreement arrived at. But the basis being unreal, the structure raised on it could not be real. The Congress mandate which Mahatmaji had carried to London had no chance of being seriously entertained there. Even the Memorandum of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and others did not "deserve" a material notice. The article to be exported to India was, therefore, of genuine and exclusive British-make. It bore, however, the spurious label of a "Firm" of both Indian and British partners. The Congress, a whole-hogger in Swadeshi, refused to buy the article. It declared itself against those who would, for some reason or other, hawk the article in the Indian market. But it would no longer picket and boycott. It would, however, not now profess that the existing constitution, or the proposed new one for that matter, is such that Nationalist India should refuse to touch it even with "a pair of tongs." The imported article has not only to be touched but seized whenever found. It is even to be "used," though not quite agreeably to the wishes of the Treasury Benches or



those that commonly hang about them. When the time comes, it is not unlikely either that the Treasury Benches themselves are stormed and captured by the Congress Party.

## XXVI. FIGHTING THE CONSTITUTION FROM WITHIN

Meanwhile, the constitution, the existing one or the prospective, is to be fought from within. The battle will be fought on general grounds as well as within special enclosures. On general grounds the proposed constitutional scheme is to be resisted inasmuch as it is the imposition of Britain's will upon India and not an expression of India's own will. The Labour Party of England had, it is true, by their Blackpool Resolution, accepted the principle of self-determination for India. When it came to power, it hung that Resolution and buried the corpse. The Congress was exhumed for a time and made to simulate life when the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was made. The choice fell on Mahatmaji to carry the resurrected corpse on his shoulders to London. There the dissembling corpse soon lost the last lingering semblance of life and gave off the stench of putrefaction. The Tories in power lost no time in sending it to the cremation grounds coming so much into vogue of late in England. Its sacred ashes have, since, been despatched to India wrapped up in a "White Paper". So Self-determination is dead. Those who will have to work the Indian Constitution will have their bodies and faces besmeared with the "ashes," and will have to work as political fakirs who have renounced all desire for fruit of their labours here below or in heaven. They will have to completely renounce their self and their will and merge themselves in a Self and Will transcending their own. It is not only political martyrdom but religious sainthood. India is enabled to attain to this transcendent height because of her being happily absolved from the fatal sin of self-will.

## XXVII. COLLECTIVE NIRVANA

The revolt of the Congress has been a revolt against this exalted Indian "redemption". It has resisted the sublimation of the base metal of Indian politics into the pure ether of a collective *nirvana* of one fifth of the human race. It will not give up self-will. It even fondly dreams of a Constituent Assembly in which it hopes to conjure up from the ashes the self-will of India like the fabled Phoenix. Bereft of all metaphor, the Congress—and in this category we now include the Socialist and the Revolutionary—attitude means its refusal to be reconciled to a dispensation which has denied India self-determination and its insistence on that fundamental right being restored to her. When it is restored to her, she will exercise this right by calling a Constituent Assembly for hammering into shape her political destiny. Now, the Congress fought the elections on the issue of this fundamental right also. It said, "We are opposed to the proposed constitution not primarily because its proposals are, in many essential respects, retrograde and reactionary, but because they have been designed behind our back and formulated over our heads, and are now sought to be imposed upon us. Will the people of India accept this imposition or reject it?"

## XXVIII. THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

But suppose the people of India decide both the issues in favour of the Congress. The results of the elections to the Assembly were an indication that they were pro Congress. But how is the Congress going to implement its resolution rejecting the imposition and demanding self-determination? The Congress, though the largest political organisation in India, cannot, forthwith, set itself up as the Constituent Assembly. There are considerable sections of the Indian public opinion which it does not represent. Though it includes the Nationalist Mussalmans, it does not include others who are called Communalists. The latter certainly represent a very considerable section of Moslem India, though one need not go the whole length with the latter in its claim that the Nationalist Muscalman is to the Communalist what a mere drop is to the ocean. Then, again, the masses of India as distinguished from the classes, though not unaffected by the Congress movement, cannot, as yet, be said to have earned a position in the national organisation commensurate with their actual strength or importance. Even the declaration of the Fundamental Rights in the Karachi Congress had not made the Congress cease to be a class-ruled organisation. The masses have still their interests in the "safe custody" of the classes. The Fundamental Rights Resolution has not brought self-determination for them in sight. The emergence of the Socialist Party inside the Congress is a move towards what the late Mr. Bepin Chandra Pal used to call Democratic Swaraj as distinguished from Aristocratic Swaraj. The latter still reserves power to the upper classes, though it may call itself Swaraj or self-rule. By it the present white bureaucracy will be replaced simply by a brown—an arrangement which as Mr. Churchill and his friends never tire to aver, will create a far worse situation for the poor Indian masses.

## XXIX. THE CONGRESS AND SOCIALISM

While on this point, we may observe that the Congress, under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi and the forceful advocacy of Pandit Jawharlal and some others, has been alive to the need of reconstructing political organisations, and also, to some extent, the social and economic structure in India on a socialistic basis. But the Congress General staff seem to have so far believed that such reconstruction may be possible, under Indian conditions, without our having to wage what is now called in the West class-war. In their judgment, the Soviet ideology and machinery need not and should not be bodily transplanted here from Russia or other countries which may present a surface resemblance to India on some points, but which are, nevertheless, not essentially and constitutionally akin to India. Perhaps Karl Marx and others of the West have not said the last word on the subject of social justice and human well-being. India has her own peculiar problem, and it is quite possible that her own genius may yet work out a solution of her own. It may not, therefore, be wise to allow the whole ancient, and presumably, tried and tested, Indian social and cultural structure to come down in a crash in an earthquake of red

revolution. And further—even if an ultimate crash be inevitable, let us not, for sake of the cause we hold dear, choose an uncanny Quetta time-table for the crash to happen. In other words, if the view-point of the advanced Indian socialists cannot be reconciled with the view-point of those who now hold power in the Congress, a civil war need not and should not be declared and fought immediately, in view of the sternest of all stern facts staring us in the face, viz., that both the classes and the masses in India have not yet attained to their “majority”, and are not entrusted with the management of their own affairs. At present they can fight not as they think they should, but as those hold them by the strings think they should. There cannot now be a “free” fight and a “free” fellowship between them. Under the existing conditions, India can neither be a full-fledged Fascist country like Germany or Italy or an out and out Communist country like the Soviet Union. The problem cannot as yet be allowed to work out its natural solution, and the premises cannot as yet be permitted to lead to their logical conclusion. Because the problem is not normal and free and the premises are not straight and categorical. In view of this, a premature civil war between the classes and the masses, as also between the Hindus and the Mussalmans, will be productive of no good. By their concerted action they should all first make the Indian problem a free problem and a straight issue. To adjust their relations, they will, probably, fight if and when they have to, but let them, meanwhile, refuse to fight, set by the ear and goaded by outside influences.

### XXX. FIGHTING A CIVIL WAR

The Indian Socialist Party, whatever its ultimate objective, should, for the present, work inside a common Indian organisation amenable to its general guidance and control. It should not, for instance, now break away from the Congress and fight a civil war on questions of principle and programme. On the other hand, the Congress should be able to evolve a formula comprehensive enough to accommodate the first essentials of the socialist programme. The Congress Executive should not lightly talk of taking “disciplinary action” the moment they scent “revolt” in an extreme Wing of their Congress camp. It is by such “revolt” that a vital organisation is allowed to renew and recreate itself, and re-adapt itself to the changed conditions of the eternal struggle for life. It is a sign of vitality. The history of the Congress itself is a history of such revolts. It could not have been otherwise. It is to be always remembered that though the Indian Socialist has booked himself for a destination further ahead, he will have to make part of his journey, possibly the major part, over a common route along with the so-called representative of class interest and privilege, before parting company with him. They may travel in a composite car, and even share the same berth, provided they keep their journey's end more in view than mere passing comfort and convenience in the transition.

### XXXI. THE COMMON ROUTE

We shall not here discuss whether the common route is also the



shortest and best. But given good-will and purity of purpose—which, we believe, are not absent in the common run of the Congress mind, Right, Left or Centre,—and given mutual persuasion and accommodation which, we also believe, are not difficult of achievement—a common route, over the major part of the journey if not to the journey's end, can be agreed upon between those who are thinking mainly in terms of the masses and those who are, at any rate for the present, thinking in terms of both classes and masses. Without evolving a comprehensive programme, the Congress cannot hope to materialise its idea of a Constituent Assembly. And it cannot claim and exercise the right of self-determination to any purpose without evolving conditions making the materialisation of that idea possible.

### XXXII. THE VIOLENCE PARTY

A common route and a composite car have to be thought of not only in relation to the Socialist Party. We have not, so far, spoken of the Party believing in violence. This party is excluded by the very terms of the Congress creed. But the party is not insignificant. It does not seem to be backed by any mass of the same opinion in the country. Practically by every shade of sensible opinion its profession and practice have been judged to be both an actual and a potential menace. It cannot be let alone. Whether one approves or not of every measure the Government has taken to control the movement, there is a general agreement as to this that the violence habit must be, without delay, ended or mended. The Government itself now believes—without losing heart or strength as it seems—that the first (i. e. ending) is not a possible alternative. Its drastic measures have so far failed to kill the violence habit. It has, accordingly, now come to think also of the other alternative—mending. Violence is not an organic disease, especially in India. It is a functional mal-adjustment. It can be cured by setting at right the causes that have produced and aggravated it. And this is no mere truism to a healing art gifted with imagination and inspired by sympathy.

### XXXIII. THE CONGRESS ATTEMPT TO STEM THE TIDE

The Congress has tried—though the authorities would not readily concede it—to stem the tide of the violence movement, firstly, by professing and, to a very considerable extent, practising non-violence in its campaign for winning national freedom; secondly, by demonstrating that its *modus operandi* in the prosecution of the campaign is a possible one which may succeed; thirdly, by working up a vast amount of mass awakening and mass effort which are needed in any virile plan—violent or non-violent—of national endeavour for achieving freedom; fourthly, by providing an outlet of dynamic activity of the Congress type for a considerable section of the youth of the country who, but for this, would probably have drifted into the dark alleys of revolution and terrorism; and, fifthly, by possibly inducing some of the confirmed revolutionists themselves to stay their hands and wait pending the trial of the Congress experiment. We say “some revolutionaries”, because, as a matter of fact, terrorist crimes never altogether stopped during the Congress movement. And it may be also permissible to imagine

that a part of the revolutionist school of action felt restive and impatient to act in their own way when they found the whole country astir with the non-cooperation and civil disobedience agitation, and that another part of the same school might have felt tempted to develop a flank movement of a violence type to further embarrass, the Government held hotly engaged by the Congress frontal attack. Nevertheless, for the reasons stated above, we may hold that the non-violence mass movement started and carried on by the Congress had, generally speaking, the effect of converting, diverting and arresting elements which, left to themselves, would have conspired, much more widely and obtrusively than they actually did, to far worse confound the revolutionary and terrorist confusion in the country. The assertion commonly made that Mahatma Gandhi has been the best policeman in India is not without a basis in truth.

#### XXXIV. THE CONGRESS SHIELD : BOTH SIDES

The authorities have not been, at any rate, in their public communique, quite ready to recognise the truth. They had seen so much of only one side of the Congress shield, that it made them almost forget or overlook the fact that the shield might have another side too. The Congress had been their enemy, but it had been also their friend. Government thought that the Congress, though professing and generally, practising non-violence, produced by its campaign of lawlessness and disobedience of constitutional authority, an atmosphere in the country favourable to the propagation of the germs of general lawlessness and revolt which, falling on the soil of immature and unbalanced youth, and other elements were productive of far more cases of malignant violent distemper than could be expected if the Congress did not so widely and so persistently breed and stir up lawlessness and revolt in the country. In this way, the Congress movement, though not itself violent, had a tendency to breed and encourage violence. Perhaps one might admit that this verdict of the authorities was not altogether a vicious perverse one. The Congress would, of course, thus join issue. Any dynamic movement on a mass scale may have repercussions not contemplated or desired by those who may have started the movement and are responsible for carrying it on. Such undesirable repercussions are in the nature of an undesired bye-product, which may be deplored but cannot perhaps be wholly avoided. The movement itself should not be given up because of that undesired bye-product or some other coming in its train. Care, however, must be taken to keep the mischief within bounds. The cause should be reasonably insured against it. One should fortify oneself with the proper antidote or serum. So insured and fortified the movement should be carried on in spite of the undesirable bye-product. When, however, the undesirable bye-product is of such nature and magnitude that it not only compromises the spirit and principle of the movement but tends to prejudicially affect or destroy the "main product" itself sought to be brought about by it, the movement should be discontinued—as the Non-Cooperation in the early twenties was discontinued by Mahatma Gandhi after the Chaurichaura affair. This step, not approved by all sections of Congressmen, was,

nevertheless, taken by Gandhiji, because, in his opinion, that movement had got mixed up with elements of violence which, though not actually stirred up by it as suggested in official and some moderate quarters, were of a nature and magnitude calculated to defeat the very end which the Congress had in view. The above, broadly stated, has been the position of the Congress lead. The Government has never accepted it. It has always thought and acted upon it that any mass movement, of a subversive character, deriving its very motive power from a spirit of law-breaking and disobedience of constituted authority, is bound to stir up more elements of mischief than it can ever hope to control, and is, therefore, sure to do more harm than good.

### XXXV. THE RECONSTRUCTION SCHEME

We need not further discuss the point at issue between the Congress and the Government as regards the repercussions of the Congress method of direct action on the elements of violence, actual or potential, in the country. The question, undoubtedly, possesses more than a historical interest in view of the fact that neither the Congress nor the Government regard direct action of the kind resorted to by the former in the recent past as an impossible or even as an improbable contingency in the future. Civil disobedience has been abandoned for the present and the chances are slight indeed of its being revived and re-adopted in the near future. The Congress Parliamentary Board seems to be more than a diversion and a temporary make-shift. It has set about tackling the legislative work in dead earnest. The "No-Changer" Group has, also, thrown itself with zest into the work of construction, particularly the reconstruction of "the 700,000 Indian villages" under the inspiration and guidance of Gandhiji himself, who retired from the Congress (after the Bombay session in October had ratified the A. I. C. C. decision sanctioning and constituting the Parliamentary Board) so that he might devote himself to a service which has ever been for him his life's chief fascination—uplift of the masses. All this is true and welcome from the point of view of those who would be glad to see the stream of national effort in India run in chartered, constitutional channels. Yet, as some later developments showed, the Government could not easily persuade itself to lay aside its misgivings as to the real motive and objective and outcome of the Village Reconstruction Scheme set in operation by the author of non-cooperation and civil disobedience himself, who had repeatedly asserted that this method of direct action was perfectly legitimate and that it was a part of his "religious faith", and had reserved the right to use the weapon to himself whilst forbidding its use for the national organisation unless and until certain conditions relating principally to its moral equipment were fulfilled. The Central Government issued a confidential circular to the local authorities calling their attention to the probable implications of the "New Deal" of Mahatma Gandhi—implications which, in the opinion of the Central Government, might point to a contemplated revival of the subversive movement on a much more extended scale involving the masses living in the villages—and to the need of forestalling and counter-manoeuvring him in what he intended to do.

The Circular in question somehow leaked out. The position was uncomfortable for the Government in all conscience, and, naturally, advantage was taken of the position to "corner" the Home Member in the Assembly, where, instead of flatly disowning the leaked-out official secret, he gallantly let "the wild cat of distrust out of the official bag" and even flung the scared animal in the midst of the serried phalanx of Gandhi caps opposite the Treasury Benches. Gandhiji himself, outside the Chamber, seemed to have not only mightily enjoyed the fun but welcomed the India Government plan of forestalling him in his Village Industries Reconstruction work as very helpful cooperation, though it might "take the wind out of his sail."

### XXXVI. MENDING AND BENDING

Direct action on the part of the Congress or any other organisation for that matter will thus appear to remain an open question still. Whatever be one's hopes or fears, one cannot rest assured that one has seen the last of it in India. Nevertheless, for some time to come, at least, "the barren path of non-cooperation" is definitely closed to traffic. So long as the present order obtains, let both the Government and the Congress put together their wisest heads, join their most charitable hearts and pool their best resources to convert the youth of India, especially that of emotional Bengal, into a nobler and ampler creed of national service, by directing its energies into worthier and more fruitful channels, and, in the same process, diverting them from the dark underground tortuous tunnels of violence and hatred. The Congress cannot be the "Constituent Assembly" and the Government the Indian National Government without successfully mending the youth of the nation and bending all its potentialities to the service of a great and worthy purpose. Till then the Constituent Assembly does not seem to be a practical proposition.

### XXXVII. THE LIVE WIRE BATTERIES

The experiment of an All Parties Conference in India is not indeed a new experiment, and it has been tried to throw into a common melting pot varied, and, in some cases conflicting, views and interests, to see whether a generally agreed plan can be precipitated out of the the solution. The experiment has not so far succeeded. The Nehru Constitutional Report, for example, was an achievement of which any body of constitution-builders and statesmen in the world would be proud. Yet the Report could not be made to serve the purpose for which it had been designed and informed, not because the authorities declined to accept the offer, but because it could not be presented as the offer of United India. United India does not, however, mean an India in which there are no dissenters. There are dissenters (Diehard and Labour) even in England as regards the constitution which the National Government now proposes to "offer" India. And the dissenters are not the proverbial half a dozen grass-hoppers in the field. India, which for a long time was not a party question in England, is now proving an explosive to blast the solidarity of parties. Still the National Government may claim that it is in a position to make the "offer" in the

name and on behalf of Great Britain. In India there is, as yet, no organisation which can claim the position of the chief accredited exponent of Indian views and aspirations. Of course the Indian National Congress has the highest claim of all that would speak and act for India. But even its franchise is at yet a mere "drop" in the ocean of the countless Indian millions. It is no doubt a most powerful drop and one that tends to expand into any magnitude. Still it is a potent drop of light in the night of Indian political darkness. That drop of light may grow, as it has been growing for some years past, and, soon, dispel the darkness. Or the darkness may close in upon it and ultimately extinguish it. Then, possibly, light may flash from another source. One thing, however, is certain—The Congress light can continue to burn and grow only by keeping its live wire connexions with those batteries which it has already been drawing upon, and by establishing its contact with other hidden batteries and unsuspected dynamos which, for one reason or other, have not so far been available for its use. Failure to fulfil either of these two conditions will cut off its supply of voltage. Mahatmaji's New Deal affecting the "700,000 Indian villages" seems to be an essay in right earnest to explore the hitherto practically unused mines of energy lying idle and uncoordinated afield. The Mahatma has realised that, without more directly and intensively tapping this source, the Congress beacon lamp will fail, as it has more than once failed on critical occasions, to emit a steady dependable light. In plain words, the Congress, before it can claim for united India, will have to come to a workable understanding consistently with its first principles, with the Communalist, the Socialist, the Revolutionary, the Moderate, and last but not the least, the much maligned Sanatanist. A constituent Assembly must be broad-based upon universal suffrage or something practically equivalent to it.

#### XXXVIII. CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE AND THE AWARD

Meanwhile, the Communal Award divided not only the communities but threatened to split the Congress itself. Towards the end of July, the Congress Working Committee and the Parliamentary Board had a joint sitting at Benares. The following Statement (Associated Press) was issued on behalf of the Congress Executive—"Pursuant to the understanding arrived at in Bombay, when Pundit Malaviya and Mr. Aney withdrew their resignation from the Parliamentary Board, their objections against the resolution of the Working Committee on the White Paper proposals and Communal Award were again discussed with them by the Working Committee at their meeting in the afternoon of July 27 and at the morning and afternoon meetings of July 28, and the Working Committee regretfully decided that it could not, consistently with its attitude towards the Communal Award, alter the said resolution so as to meet or obviate those objections. Consequently on the decision of the Working Committee Pundit Malaviya and Mr. Aney have resigned from the Parliamentary Board." The Panditji and Sriji Aney had submitted to the Working Committee a confidential document (of closely printed 20 pages) explaining and vindicating their position and that of other nationalist Hindu leaders. Some portions of that document were, however, published in the newspapers immediately



after. They provide a most instructive reading. We are given a history of the Communal Problem in India, of the steps that have been taken by the Congress and other important public organisations in India and by R. T. C. in London to solve the problem, and of the influences that have been at play and of the forces that have been introduced at various stages of the drama to complicate, obstruct or otherwise interfere with its natural and legitimate solution. It should be remembered that in July 1931 the Congress Working Committee had itself put forward a scheme of communal settlement. It was on the basis of joint electorates with reservation of seats for minorities where they might demand it in proportion to their population and with the right to contest further seats. At the R. T. C. also, Mahatma Gandhi put his scheme forward on behalf of the Congress. Speaking about it, Gandhiji said—"I venture to submit that of all the schemes I have seen, it is the most workable scheme.....You have that scheme on behalf of the Congress". It should be remembered further that the Moslem leaders themselves (the communalist leaders, that is,) have not occupied an identical, stationary position as regards the communal question. They have moved from trench to trench, always advancing, never retreating or giving way. The Communal Award seems to have carried their "front line" beyond even their wildest expectations. They now find two of the fairest provinces laid low at their feet—Bengal and the Punjab. Other provinces also are crouching with their backs bent under the "weightages". Of course the anti-national communalist forces in this country have received every encouragement from the diehard reactionary factors both here and in England, and from the failure of the Congress (in which the nationalist forces have so long found themselves effectively organised) to impose its will on the trend of political events in the country. The need of having to treat with the Congress and form "pacts" with it lost its strength and its urgency. And, *pari passu* with it, the need of having to make some effective insurance against a future upheaval of nationalist forces by communal and other devices gained in importance and urgency. To quote again from the confidential document—"It is difficult to see how the change from this (communal) system to national representation is ever to occur. The British Government is often accused of dividing men in order to govern them, but if it unnecessarily divides them at the very moment when it professes to start them on the road to governing themselves, it will find it difficult to meet the charge of being short-sighted".

#### XXXIX. THE NATIONALIST VIEW-POINT

We can hardly do better than quoting *in extenso* the observations of the said document on what it calls the net result of the attitude of neutrality now adopted by the Congress as to the Communal Award.

"The Working Committee has said that judged by the national standard, the Award is wholly unsatisfactory besides being open to serious objections on other grounds. It has added that it is, however, obvious that the only way to prevent the untoward consequences of the Communal Award is to explore ways and means of arriving at an agreed solution and it has further qualified what it has said by unnecessarily forbidding an appeal to the British Government or any other outside

authority in what it calls this essentially domestic question which has ceased to be a domestic question and has become a political question of the highest importance by the manner in which the British Government has dealt with it. The effect of the attitude taken up by the Working Committee is that a nationalist who will be elected on the Congress ticket as a member of the Legislature will be bound to abstain from voting against the Communal Award if any one should bring forward a resolution on the subject. He will also be bound to abstain from making any representation against the Award to the British Government or to any other outside authority.

"The result will be that while in view of the fact that the Joint Parliamentary Committee and the British Parliament will be dealing with the proposed legislation which will include the communal decision of the Government, a tearing agitation will be carried on throughout the country as part of the election campaign against the White Paper but there will be no such propaganda by Congressmen against the Communal Award and the wrong impression which has been created by the action of the Working Committee will be strengthened that the Communal Award has been accepted by the Congress and, therefore, by the Hindus and Sikhs.

"In our opinion, in view of the entire circumstances mentioned above, it was the clear duty of the Congress Working Committee not to have adopted an attitude of neutrality towards the Communal Award but to have stood up for the Working Committee scheme of 1931. By not doing so it has given Nationalists in general and Hindus and Sikhs in particular cause for just complaint.

"We fear that the Communal Award has been considered more from the communal than from the national point of view. Sedulous attempts have been made to foster a feeling in the mind of nationalists that the Communal Award affects the question of only the distribution of seats among the several communities in the legislatures. Even if it were so, it would still be a matter of deep national concern but as a matter of fact that the communal aspect of the Award is of secondary importance. The matter of primary importance is how the Award affects the national question of questions, viz., the establishment of Swaraj, self-Government or responsible self-Government. It is clearly the duty of every nationalist to examine the Award primarily from the national point of view. Looking at it from that point of view it is important to note that distinguished Indian Nationalists who cannot be accused of any communal bias have condemned the Award as anti-national, arbitrary and unjust and have urged its complete rejection."

#### XL. THE AWARD AND THE WHITE PAPER

The Communal Award, naturally, went in for a good deal of adverse criticism—both as regards its principle and details—in the nationalist circles in India. The communalists, on the other hand, would insist upon our accepting the Award as something irrevisable and unmodifiable except, possibly as a future contingency, by mutual agreement. The attitude of Whitehall was the same also. Sir Samuel Hoare said that the proposals in the Communal Award differed substantially from other proposals in the White paper in as much as the British Government



had said its last word on the former subject. Sir Samuel Hoare would advise the Joint Parliamentary Committee against reopening the question. The Chairman of the J. P. C., however, allowed Sir Nripen Sarkar to put further questions on the Award. Mussalman leaders—Mr. Jinnah for example—reminded us that the Award was not a proposal but that it was the decision of an arbitrator, and, therefore, final and a bond of honour. Having invited the arbitration, we were both duty bound and honour bound to loyally accept the decision. The position, however, that the British Premier's Award was in the nature of an arbitration voluntarily sought by competent agents in the name and on behalf of their principals and under conditions that would make the contract a free, normal and legitimate one, was a position not accepted outside the communalist and official circles. Let us, however, put this aside.

#### XLI. THE CONGRESS POSITION : THE DILEMMA.

The Congress attitude of neutrality in relation to the Award was, of course, not born of a mind still unformed and undecided on the communal issue. The Congress had always been clear and categorical on the question of national problems being solved on a communalistic basis. Yet, as Babu Rajendra Prasad attempted to show in his justification of the Congress attitude in a couple of articles appearing in the *Hindustan Review*—the present attitude of neutrality was taken not in consideration of what should have been under ideal conditions ; but that it was determined by considerations of the actual realities of the situation. That is to say, the Congress acted not as an idealist should have acted, but as a practical man bent upon giving a prudent guidance to the country under conditions admittedly complicated and difficult. The Congress had found itself between the horns of a dilemma—Reject the Communal Award forthwith and thus create a breach in the “united front” which is so essential for successfully fighting the White Paper imposition ; or accept the Award and show an ostensibly united front which, however, is not only a mirage but a morass. There is no getting out of the morass once you get into it. And the surest way to sink all hopes of India's redemption is to be led into the morass of communalism. For, there is no denying the fact that the lack of a truly united front has been the cause of the downfall of India's countless millions ; and this has operated as the effective bar sinister arresting their advance in every direction. Now, the Congress sought to escape from both the horns of the dilemma by “neither accepting nor rejecting” the Communal Award. This attitude of neutrality did not mean that the Congress proposed to take its hands off the communal business for all time. Whilst abstaining from siding with this party or that on communal questions in the legislature, it would join hands with other parties in resisting the “offer” of an undesired constitution to India, and with their help and co-operation, attempt to materialise, as early as possible, the idea of a Constituent Assembly for giving effect to India's self-determination in the matter of her political destiny, and, along with it, or rather as a condition precedent to it, it would seek, with far greater chances of success than as at present, to solve the outstanding communal problem—which was a purely domestic affair—by mutual agreement.

## XLII. THE TACTICAL ADVANTAGE

The basis underlying this position—which *prima facie* seemed sound—was carefully tested by Pandit Malaviya and Nationalist friends, and their verdict was—"unsound and unsafe." We do not propose to examine that basis for ourselves now. A whole literature has cropped up on the subject. Sir Nripen Sarkar's able pamphlet, the confidential document of Malaviya and Aney which we have both quoted and cited, the Marquis of Zetland's confidential memorandum circulated to the members of the J. P. C., and many other writings by other prominent leaders which from time to time appeared in the Press, have focussed light on one side of the problem. The other side has also not been allowed to remain dark. We referred to the articles of Babu Rajendra Prasad. But his have not been the only contributions from the Congress side. Though we have not here examined the question, our own view is that the tactical advantage which the Congress Parliamentary Party is supposed to have gained by declaring for the time being, i. e. pending mutual agreement, its neutrality on the communal issue in its fight for Swaraj, is a minor and illusory gain, which cannot be regarded as a strategic victory of a real and abiding nature. The communalist ally in the legislature may help to make the "legislative" victory (a mock victory in itself) of the Congress an easy walk over, and, as we have tried to understand at some length before, this, in its turn, may help to lift the moral fog which ordinarily hangs thick and heavy on the chambers of Indian legislatures. By that fog Indian official acts and measures are made to appear not only as bigger than they are, or should be, in reality, but are invested with a peculiar splendour inspiring a sense of sublimity and awe. By lifting the fog, you dispel that part of it which is a delusion. This is something. But have you not, by the very terms of your alliance with the communalist in the legislature and in the very conditions under which that alliance is to be maintained, made him your adversary and antagonist in the field of united, undivided national effort and service, by which alone, as you admit, the common national goal has to be reached? We leave the matter however at that.

## XLIII. PANDITJI &amp; SJ. ANEY'S STATEMENT

On August 4, Pundit Malaviya and Srijut Aney issued a Joint Statement from Benares detailing the circumstances, and explaining the reasons relevant to the step they had taken in severing their connexion with the Congress Parliamentary Board and forming a new Party. That statement, after assuring all concerned that those two Congress leaders had "no difference with the Congress except in the matter of its attitude towards the Communal Award", proceeds to say in the last two paragraphs:—

"To carry out this object we propose to form the Nationalist Party to organise a campaign throughout the country against the Communal Award as well as the White Paper and to set up in every province certain number of such candidates for election to the Assembly as will work for the rejection of both. The membership

will be open to all Indians irrespective of caste and creed and the Party will work on strictly national lines. It will whole-heartedly co-operate in any endeavour to bring about an agreed solution of the Communal problem.

"The Nationalist Party holds that there should be no tampering with the Lucknow Pact except with the consent of the parties concerned and that until a final settlement is reached *status quo* should be maintained. If change is to be made the Party will stand by the conclusion reached by the Nehru Report and the Congress of 1928 that separate electorates must be discarded completely as a condition precedent to any national system of representation and generally by the Congress scheme of July 1931, which Mr. Gandhi placed before the Round Table Conference and which has been supported by Nationalist Muslims all over the country. The Party will also take at proper time whatsoever steps it may think fit to have objectionable features of the Communal Award radically modified by the British Parliament, when the Award comes before it as an integral part of the White Paper proposals.

"The Party does not approve of legislative interference in matters of religion.

#### XLIV. "THE INEVITABLE SPLIT"

An episode flashing some interesting light on the inner history of the "inevitable split" in the Congress camp, and, apparently, showing the responsibility of Gandhiji himself in what happened, was provided by Bhai Paramananda's Statement (August, 4) releasing for general information the brief correspondence that had passed between him and Gandhiji regarding the question of the Congress attitude towards the Communal Award. In course of that Statement Bhaiji said—"But for Mahatma Gandhi, the decision (of the Working Committee regarding the Congress attitude towards the Award) would have been entirely different. Gandhiji alone is responsible for this resolution and its consequences." Bhaiji had addressed a letter to Gandhiji in April in which he had alluded to a report that the latter had been inclined to look with favour on the proposal made by Mr. Jinnah, that is, the Communal Award should be accepted by the Hindus for the time being, unless some agreed solution was found for the same, "and on that basis joint fight be given to the Government against the White Paper." Then, that letter proceeded to observe that the "Joint basis" sought to be arranged for was a very uncertain basis in view of the fact that most of the communalist elements had made up their mind to go in for the Award as part and parcel of the White Paper scheme. "It will, therefore, bring us no substantial backing of the Mohammedans in the fight against the White Paper and place the Hindus in a very false position." He would, therefore, earnestly request Mahatmaji to reconsider etc. Mahatmaji replied from Patna on May 10. He had indeed been exercising his mind on the question of communal settlement, though nothing had been publicly expressed so far. "But I do feel that the Communal Award can never be unsettled except by an agreement and the agreement is impossible without large-heartedness on our part." True, large-heartedness is never wasted, and one may believe that it even pays in politics in the long run. But the "largeness", like non-violence and truth, must come straight from the heart. To work the

miracle, it must be real and not something feigned or forced. And it can never be real when it proceeds from a sense of weakness or helplessness. Now, nationalist Hindus and Sikhs have generally felt that any communal "blank cheque" which they are now in a position to "offer" to the Mohammedans may not be endorsed and honoured in a bank in which their actual balance or credit may not be sufficiently "large".

#### XLV. NATIONALIST CONFERENCE IN CALCUTTA

In the last week of August, a Nationalist Conference was held in Calcutta, which was the occasion for a formal inauguration of the New Party. Pundit Malaviya, presiding over the Conference, explained its objects. We need not go into the speeches made by the leaders, the key-note of them all being that the new Party, with its pronounced difference of attitude as to the communal issue, should not, however, be regarded as representing a revolt against the Congress. We cannot, however, resist the temptation of quoting a few lines from the opening address of Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray, President of the Organising Committee:—

"The Nationalist Party will be a Party within the sheltering bosom of the Indian National Congress, a Party which.....by its uncompromising rejection of weak-kneed compromises, purge the Congress of all wavering and half-hearted tactics and raise once more the National Institution to its position of undisputed authority in the country."

It should be related in this connection that a 3 days final attempt (pending the plenary session of the Congress itself in Bombay in October) at a compromise between the new Party and the Congress Working Committee was made at Wardha. The attempt was, unfortunately, not crowned with success. The Congress General Secretary issued (Sept. 10) a Statement detailing the position as it then stood. We annex the following Press summary of that abortive attempt at compromise:—

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Mr. Aney met Mahatma Gandhi and members of the Working Committee and Parliamentary Board this afternoon and again in the evening. It is understood that it became clear in the discussion that revision of the resolution of the Working Committee on the Communal Award was out of question. It is also understood that it was brought to the notice of the Working Committee that certain candidates in Bengal had been assured that they would be given freedom of conscience to vote on questions relating to the Communal Award, but the Committee laid it down that no such freedom could be allowed to any of the candidates who would seek election to the Assembly on Congress ticket. The proposal to allot a certain number of seats to the Congress Nationalist Party was also rejected. The last proposal was that each party should agree to withdraw its candidate in favour of the candidate of the other party if he had better chances of success, but no agreement was reached on this basis also."

#### XLVI. "INDIA'S GOAL"

On Sept. 11, the Working Committee, meeting at Wardha, passed and published an important resolution on "India's goal". The text of the relevant portion of the resolution is given below:—

“Misgivings have arisen in the minds of some Congressmen and others that the Congress goal of Poorna Swaraj or complete independence is being imperceptibly watered down. The Working Committee desires, therefore, to state that no Congressman, much less any Congress organisation, can do so without being liable to a charge of indiscipline. Congressmen and Congress organisations have to shape their course so as to accelerate the pace towards the goal by keeping Poorna Swaraj before one's eye as well as the means for its attainment which must be strictly non-violent and truthful. To this end Congressmen are expected to give effect to the resolutions and instructions that may from time to time be issued by the A.I.C.C. or the Working Committee.

“Poorna Swaraj includes unfettered national control among other things over the army and other defence forces, external affairs, fiscal and commercial matters and financial and economic policy. Free India should have the freedom to make its choice between voluntary partnership with the British and complete separation. Whilst the Congress will not repudiate just obligations, it must adhere to the resolution to have an impartial scrutiny of the obligations to be undertaken by free India. The Congress has repeatedly declared from its inception that the British Empire, as it is constituted, is designed predominantly, if not purely, to subserve British interests at the cost of India and therefore whilst it will gladly cultivate friendship with the British, it must strain every nerve to end the present unnatural and humiliating connection.

“But the Congress has also equally repeatedly declared that this political freedom must remain unattainable without attaining moral or internal freedom by carrying out an internal and constructive and comprehensive programme laid down from time to time by the Working Committee. The Congress is nothing if it does not progressively represent and serve the masses. Such a service is impossible without following the constructive programme of the Congress with meticulous care and devotion.”

#### XLVII. THE CONGRESS AND COMMUNAL AWARD

Two important events during the latter part of the half year under report were the holding of the Bombay session of the Indian National Congress in October and the publication of the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee in November. We shall not here attempt a narration of the former event nor a summary and criticism of the latter. They will be found described in the body of this Register. We may, however, note that the net results of Bombay Congress deliberations were these: (1) Mahatmaji retired from the Congress; (2) a constructive programme with a distinct machinery to carry it through was adopted; (3) the Council-entry programme of the Congress Parliamentary Board was endorsed and the machinery for implementing the decision pertaining thereto was reconstituted and its relation to the Congress Executive defined; (4) the Working Committee view of the Communal Award was reaffirmed, by virtue of which candidates fighting the elections to the legislatures on the Congress ticket were forbidden to make the communal issue a plank in their electioneering campaign, and members elected to the legislatures were required to keep themselves neutral on questions relating to



the Award. The Award was to be modified by mutual agreement as, for instance, it had been modified in that part which pertained to the relative representation of the Caste Hindus and the Depressed Classes by the Poona Pact immediately endorsed by the British Government. It is interesting to note in this connection that the Bill for the "better government" of India framed on the lines of the J. P. C. R. and piloted by Sir Samuel Hoare through the House of Commons included an amended clause which authorised His Majesty's Government by Order-in-Council to alter the Communal Award—a provision which was claimed as "a moral victory" by that valiant leader of Hindu Mahasabha Movement—Bhai Paramanand. Though the incident belongs to a time much ahead of the half year under report, we reproduce below the letter of Bhaiji (29-6-35) as throwing some interesting light on the entire tangled background of the Communal Award :—

"I am not at all surprised that Moslem leaders are agitated about the amendment of clause 285 (now numbered 299), of the India Bill. The Anglo-Indian Press and the Secretary of State have assured the Moslem community that the Government are not going back on their word and that the amendment in the clause makes no material change.

"But these assurances have produced no effect on Moslem leaders. They ask why there should be any amendment if no significance is to be attached to it and they are the more nervous because the portfolio of the India Office has been made over to Lord Zetland, who is a declared opponent of the Communal Award.

"The Communal Award was meant to solve the constitutional difficulty with regard to the distribution of rights among the various communities. It had to be put into constitutional shape in order to be embodied in the Bill as a part of the constitution. Moslem leaders, however, began to work under a misconception. Their view, altogether opposed to reason, was strengthened by the utterances of Sir Samuel Hoare and also by the weak and cowardly attitude taken up by the Congress leaders towards the Communal Award.

"Sir Samuel Hoare declared it as a settled fact, inviolable and beyond all criticism. Congress leaders out of fear of offending the Moslems, did not want it to be disturbed until some substitute, agreeable to Moslems, could be found. The Moslem community treated the Award as a revealed command of God Himself and consequently inviolable.

"The Hindu Mahasabha, from the very beginning, opposed it. When our representatives appeared as witnesses before the Joint Parliamentary Committee they began to criticise the Award. Sir Abdur Rahim immediately said, in effect, that had he known that the Communal Award was to be debated he would not have agreed to become a member of the Committee. Lord Salisbury and Lord Zetland urged that it was within the privilege of that Committee to examine the Award and as a result of the discussion Lord Linlithgow, the Chairman, ruled that the Award could be considered by the Committee.

"The Moslems had all along believed that they were the arbiters of this aspect of the constitution of India and that no change could be made except with their consent and in the absence of agreement on their part nobody on this earth, not even Parliament or the King, had

the power to make any change. It was disconcerting to be told that, constitutionally, this position could not stand and while Clause 285, as originally drafted, left the position rather vague, the amendment passed by the House of Commons empowers the Legislatures, the Viceroy and Governors, to make any modification in the franchise, in the method of election or in the composition of the Chambers.

"The effect of the amendment is that vagueness and absurdity of the condition of mutual agreement in the Communal Award is removed. The initiative of any such improvement is given to the particular Legislature which proposes the change and it is left to the Viceroy or the Governor to see that the majority of the members of the minority community are also in favour of the proposed change. This amendment therefore makes the India Bill worth the name of a constitution in that respect and so far as the principle is concerned the Hindu Mahasabha has gained a moral victory.

"This, however, does not mean that the agitation against the Communal Award has been altogether successful. If Congress had joined hands with us we would surely have been in a position to have the wrong redressed beyond all doubt. As it is, a persistent agitation against the Communal Award will have to be maintained and strenuously carried on till the object is gained."

But Bhaiji's balloon of "moral victory" was dashed to the ground by the Government Communique issued on the authority of His Majesty's Government which gave the clearest assurance to all concerned that the Government had no intention of going back upon their word as pledged to the communalists—that there was absolutely no chance of the Communal Decision being altered by Order-in-Council or otherwise except upon a basis of unanimous agreement among all the parties affected by it, and also, as Lord Zetland—the new Secretary of State for India who, by the bye, had been a declared opponent of the Communal Award, in some of its aspects, in the J. P. C.—added, "without the specific consent of the Parliament." He even promised to "implement" this assurance by making necessary alterations in the relevant sections of the India Bill, viz., those that purported to empower the Government to change the Communal representation under certain circumstances by Order-in-Council.

As regards the main results and tendencies of the J. P. C. proposals including the Communal Decision, a nationalist critic could hardly improve upon the "summing up" as given by *The Modern Review* on a later date of the India Bill based substantially on the J. P. C. R. with minor alterations (e. g., indirect election to the Federal Legislature) which tended to make the Bill even worse than the Report :—

"The Indian Bill is based on injustice. It denies freedom to India and closes all the constitutional avenues to freedom. It provides no means and methods whereby Indians themselves can achieve self-rule without having to fall on their knees and supplicating the British Parliament every time for even every petty "boon". It treats the people of India as not only not a nation but even as not having made any progress towards nationhood, and therefore gives practically permanent recognition to as many separate interests as the officials could think of and creates divisions where they did not and do not exist. It proceeds on the



assumption that no group cares or should care for the interests of any other group and that no person belonging to a particular community, class, etc., should represent any other community, class, etc.

"It has done great harm to minorities in general by tending to alienate the majority from them and by telling the majority, as it were, that they were not responsible for the welfare of the minorities—for have not the latter got their own exclusive representatives to look after their interests and, above all, is not the Governor and are not the great British people present to prevent the majority from crushing them?

"It is not possible to point out in detail all the other unjust provisions of the Bill. We shall briefly enumerate a few.

"1. It is unjust to British India by giving it less representatives than it is entitled to on the basis of population, not to speak of education, public spirit, etc.

"2. It does injustice to the people of the Indian States by totally ignoring them.

"3. It is very unjust to the Hindus as it gives them less representation than they are entitled to on the basis of population—not to speak of their education, public spirit, business enterprise, etc.—and reduces them, the majority, to the position of a minority.

"4. It gives the nominated representatives of the rulers of the Indian States power over British India affairs without giving British India representatives any power over the internal affairs of the States.

"5. It vivisects the Hindu community and divides it into the two groups of the "caste" Hindus and the "depressed" caste Hindus. There are "untouchables" "depressed" classes among Christians, Muhammadans and Sikhs also, but the Bill has a tender spot in its "heart" only for the Hindu community, and therefore vivisects it alone.

"6. The European sojourners of India are not permanent inhabitants of the country and yet they have been given the vote, though Indian residents in the British Dominions and Colonies have not generally got the franchise.

"7. Assuming that the Europeans are entitled to representation, they have been given far larger representation than they are entitled to on the population or any other basis.

"8. Though the Muhammadans are not quite one-fourth of the population of British India, yet they have been given one-third of the total British India seats in the Federal Legislature.

"9. The most populous provinces and the more populous provinces of British India have been given a smaller number of representatives in the Federal Legislature in order to give excessive representation to some less populous provinces.

"10. The Muhammadan minorities in the U. P., Madras, Bihar, Bombay, C. P. & Berar, and Orissa have been given 'weightage' in the Councils, but the Hindu minorities in Bengal and the Punjab have not been shown the same consideration. On the contrary, the Hindus in Bengal have been given a much smaller number of representatives than they would be entitled to on the basis of population. The Hindu minorities in Sind and N. W. F. Province, it is true, have been given some 'weightage', but the populations concerned being very small, this is no compensation for the great injustice done to Hindus everywhere else.

"11. In the Provinces where Christians have been given separate representation, it is disproportionately large."

Thus while the J. P. C. R. and the India Bill based thereupon were so framed as to make the Empire safe in India, the whole machinery of western civilisation and international structure were tottering on their foundations under the alarmingly growing conditions of what we might call the "collective insecurity" of the nations of the world. The League as an instrument of collective security was fast crumbling to pieces. In this connection also we shall do well perhaps to look ahead into the coming year and take stock of some dramatic international developments that have already cast their ominous shadow on the current world situation. Sir Samuel Hoare was transferred to the Foreign Office, and, as we have noted before, Lord Zetland, the ex-Bengal Governor, was installed on the *gaddi* of the Great White Moghul. There was a debate on foreign affairs in the Commons in July, 1935. The Italian-Abyssinian impasse provided the occasion. We quote below a few lines (Reuter's summary) from the speech of Mr. Lloyd George whose spirited intervention in the debate was a treat and a warning:—

"The debate was remarkable for a spirited intervention on the part of Mr. Lloyd George in defence of the framers of the Peace Treaty, of which he said the most harsh conditions had been enforced while the more equitable conditions had been averted, delayed, procrastinated and often trampled upon. Mr. Lloyd George said that the whole machinery of the League was discredited. Japan had defied the League and had frog-marched into China from one province to another. Even Paraguay and Bolivia had ignored the League and had fought themselves to a standstill. Germany had flouted the League and Italy was doing the same.

"Each time the nations congregated at Geneva to carry the Ark of the Covenant into action, they leave it in the hands of the Philistines", declared Mr. Lloyd George, who continued: "Co-operation has gone. The great German Army and the Air Fleet remain. The League of Nations remains—on a scrap-heap. Sir Samuel Hoare and Mr. Anthony Eden should realise the grim fact that all the elaborate machinery of disarmament has gone and the machinery of conciliation is discredited. They must begin afresh and devise something by which the nations will stand to save civilisation from the great catastrophe".

#### XLVIII. WHICH WAY THE WIND BLOWS

The above quotation indicates which way the wind blows. In the coming catastrophe, it is wise no doubt to try to make the Empire safe in India, but it is wiser to remember that this cannot be really done without making India safe in the Empire. In other words, India must be made a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations, not in a position of subordination and consequent weakness, but in a position of equality, contentment and strength. And there is no gainsaying that a contented India, grown to the fulness of her stature, is the very immensity of power. India's help in the last war was of value. Of how much greater value that help should prove if India be helped

to speedily develop into her plenitude of strength and rise to her summit of helpfulness ! The fatal defect of the present constitutional proposals of the Tory Government is this that while seeking to make the Empire safe in India, it has neglected to make the position of India safe and sound in the Empire. It is the same mistake that lost America in the distant past and Ireland in the near. Possibly India will be still loyal and serviceable in any coming war in which the Empire may be involved ; but it was well within the ambit of enlightened British statesmanship so to develop and train her in the meanwhile as to make her loyalty and service the deciding factor in the future trial of strength. Before leaving this subject, we shall quote the concluding lines of the President's speech at the Bombay session of the Indian National Congress explaining the Congress goal of independence and showing how even Indian independence, under the conditions in which it must be ushered was destined to prove a source of security and strength to the Commonwealth of Nations including the British :—

“Independence is the natural outcome of all that the freedom movement in India has stood for. It cannot mean isolation particularly when we remember that it has to be achieved by non-violence. It means the end of exploitation of one country by another and of one part of the population of the same country by another part. It contemplates a free and friendly association with other nations for the mutual benefit of all. It forebodes evil to none, not even to those exploiting us except in so far as they rely upon exploitation rather than goodwill. The sanction behind this Independence movement is non-violence which in its positive and dynamic aspect is good-will of and for all.

“We already see signs of how it has begun appealing to a certain extent to world opinion. This appeal has to become irresistible. It can do so according as the element of distrust and suspicion which has its birth in fear is eliminated and replaced by a sense of security born of confidence in the goodwill of India. India having no designs on others will not then need a large army either for its protection against foreigners or for internal peace which will stand guaranteed by the goodwill of other inhabitants. Having no designs on others she will be able to claim immunity from the evil designs of others and her safety will be buttressed and protected by the goodwill of the world at large. Conceived in this light, our independence ought not to frighten even the British unless they aim at perpetuating the present unnatural conditions.

The method too is crystal clear. It is active dynamic non-violent mass action. We may fail once ; we may fail twice ; but we are bound to succeed some day. Many have lost their lives and all many more have sacrificed themselves in their struggle for freedom. Let us not be deterred by the difficulties which confront us nor diverted from our straight course by fear or favour. Our weapons are unique and the world is watching the progress of great experiment with interest and high expectation. Let us be true to our creed and firm in our determination. Satyagraha in its active application may meet with temporary setbacks but it knows no defeat. It is itself a great victory, for as James Lowell put it,

“Truth for ever on the scaffold  
Wrong for ever on the throne  
Yet that scaffold sways the future  
And behind the dim unknown  
Standeth God with the shadow  
Keeping watch above His Own.”

#### XLIX. THE ECONOMIC POSITION : AGRICULTURE

As regards the economic position of India, we shall do more than quote at some length from the Viceroy's speech, August 29, which, after having referred to the labours and findings of the Provincial Economic Conference previously (in April) convened by the Government of India, thus dwelt upon the question of Indian agriculture (including marketing of agricultural produce) which is and will remain the key problem of Indian economics :—

“To turn the wide field of agriculture, which is still to the masses of India their main source of livelihood and is, therefore, one primary concern of the Government, hon. members must be aware that the Provincial Economic Conference which my Government had convened last April reviewed the position of the agriculturists from the standpoint of rural credit as well as agricultural marketing and production. One of the conclusions reached by the Government of India after consideration of the proceedings of the conference was that all possible steps should be taken to ascertain how far agricultural production in India was being scientifically co-ordinated, and whether any action was desirable or feasible to make such co-ordination more efficient and more effective. My Government, accordingly, convened, with the ready co-operation of local Governments, which I take this opportunity to acknowledge, a conference of provincial directors of agriculture, land revenue officers and non-official representatives from the various provinces last June. This conference reviewed exhaustively the position of all the principal crops in India. After a full consideration of all the relevant factors, the conference came to the satisfactory conclusion that crop planning in India had not proceeded on unscientific and haphazard lines but had been well planned and on the whole achieved its aims of helping the ryot to use his land to the best purpose, but in the prevailing welter of economic uncertainty the conference, if I may say so, wisely held that a machinery should be provided for the systematic and continuous study of problems relating to the cultivation of India's more important crops, such as wheat and rice. To this end it recommended the establishment appropriate *ad hoc* committees. The hon. members will doubtless be glad to know that this recommendation has been accepted by my Government. It is hoped that by this means periodical stock-taking of the position of our principal crops and of their prospects in the world's markets will be greatly facilitated. The value of continuous study and periodical review in this respect cannot be over-estimated. Adjustment of agricultural activity of a country to changing conditions of demand is necessary for the prosperity of the agriculturist. Difficulties of such adjustment in a country of the size of India are evident. Adaptation to changing needs of the market

will be impossible of accomplishment without the acquisition and maintenance upto date of all relevant information.

"Another problem of even greater practical importance to the agriculturist is the marketing of his produce to the best advantage. This subject was also discussed in the Provincial Economic Conference where there was general agreement that an intensive programme to develop marketing facilities for agricultural products offered the best immediate prospect of substantial results. The matter has been under close examination since the Economic Conference concluded. With the help of the marketing expert, who recently joined the staff of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, a programme of work has been drawn up, which, it is hoped, will very shortly be initiated.

"Experience gained elsewhere shows that the range of marketing activities must be wide. It must, for example, include the organisation of an efficient intelligence service in external markets regarding Indian products and the requirements of consumers, both abroad and in this country. An efficient marketing organisation must also ensure the grading, sorting and bulking of the main staple products and the establishment and development of regulated markets in India. The first task is the undertaking of market surveys for the purpose of ascertaining the data on which future developments can be planned. The initial step, therefore, will be to obtain and set out in detail the present system of marketing the more important commodities, such as wheat and rice, oil seeds plantation and special crops, e.g., tobacco and fruit as also dairy products in which term I include live-stock. This survey will be carried out not only in each of the provinces separately, but also deal with inter-provincial, inter-state and foreign trade so as to provide an all-India picture of existing conditions and a common basis for future progress. The report on each survey will set out in precise technical detail definite suggestions regarding marketing organisation with a view to improving existing conditions in the interests of producers. The work connected with the execution of these surveys will be shared between the central and provincial marketing staffs; but it is the intention of my Government that at least in the initial stages the cost should be met from central revenues so that the urgent task of ascertaining the data and formulating a co-ordinated plan of marketing organisation should not be delayed by reason of the inability of one or more provinces to meet the cost of such investigations. The question as to how the cost of the various organisations and activities resulting from these surveys should be met will be one of the future consideration on the basis of the benefits expected from the plans that may be adopted."

#### L. LIBERAL FEDERATION

During the closing days of the half year under review, the National Liberal Federation met at Poona which admirably surveyed the political situation as likely to be created or affected by the J. P. C. R. proposals regarding constitutional changes and the Communal Award. Pundit Kunzru's Presidential Address discussed in detail the recommendations of the J. P. C., especially seizing upon the points of departure from the White Paper proposals. For those particularly interested in a critical study of those proposals, the speech referred to (vide page 270 of this



Register) may be recommended as a lucid and succinct presentation of the case. On the most vexed and vital question (primarily a domestic one) which has split even the Congress into two, we quote below some lines from Mr. Kale's (Chairman of the Reception Committee) Address :—

"The Committee has laid too much stress on the age-old antagonism between the Hindu and Mahomedan communities with numerous exclusive minorities with rigid divisions of caste and therefore it says communal representation must be accepted. Mr. Kale proceeded to show by quoting from the history of the Marathas by the late Justice Ranade that during the period immediately preceding the British conquest, there had been achieved a liberalisation in the religious thoughts of the people and the spirit of tolerance engendered with the result that the communities were acting in a friendly spirit towards each other owing to the advent of the protestant movements inaugurated by Saints and Prophets, both Hindu and Mahomedan—a movement which bore a curious parallel to the history of the Reform movement which had sprung upon Western Europe at the same time. There was a tendency towards the reconciliation of the two races in mutual recognition of the essential unity of Rama and Rahiman in the 17th and 18th centuries. After the advent of the British Rule the labours of men like Raja Ram Mohan Roy of Bengal and Mr. Justice Ranade of Bombay largely contributed to the social and religious amelioration of the people and these were continued by workers like the late Dr. Mrs. Annie Besant and Mr. Gokhale.

Mr. Kale then dealt with the genesis of communal problem and quoting from the note to appendix V of the Simon Commission Report, showed how the separate representation of Mahomedans in the Councils of the Morley-Minto Reforms was not intended as a step in the direction of establishment of Parliamentary Government of India, how the Lucknow Pact should not and cannot be quoted as justification of the continuance of separate electorates, which have been condemned as vicious and unsound from time to time in various documents, both official and non-official, nor was it correct to say that India itself had deliberately chosen this road to responsible government, for it was the British authorities who were primarily responsible for pointing out this wrong road in 1909. This last remark, he added, might well be applied to the so-called Communal Award of 1933. He asked if the British Government are said to be trustees looking to the welfare of the people of India, is it not their plain duty not to do anything which is wrong in principle and opposed to all canons of responsible Government? Are they not committing a breach of their trust by continuing the vicious system when experience has shown that separate electorates since their introduction have tended to emphasise the differences and increase the tension between the communities? Is it not a commentary on their professions that they are leading us on the right path of self-government? The defect of communal representation in the constitution affects the fundamental and basic principle in any constitutional advance towards full responsible Government. He regretted that no constituent powers had been given to the Legislatures of India for removing this and other defects nor any time limit put on this. He

challenged the statement made in the Report that "there is among almost all the communities in India (not excepting the Hindus) a very considerable degree of acquiescence in the Award." Mr. Kale asked if the communal decision was not a strange commentary on the professions made by the British authorities that they are leading us on the path to real self-government, while perpetuating conditions antagonistic to it."

## II. WOMEN'S CONFERENCES

While the manhood of India was thus "forging ahead" by its Congresses and Conferences and Committees, the womanhood of India, which was regarded as the main factor maintaining the social and cultural—and, indirectly, the political—*status quo* of India, was also astir and did not permit itself to lag far behind. Every province and many of the more advanced Native States held full-fledged Women Conferences, in which speeches were made and resolutions passed that would gladden the hearts of our most advanced sisters of the West and inspire them with the hope that, at last, the silver lining, visible for some time past, to the dark cloud of Indian ignorance and backwardness was spreading and lighting up the cloud itself, making it the Hope and the Glory it ought to have been rather than the menace and shame it had actually been. Many are looking up with admiration and wonder; but many also have a suspicion that the "celestial glory" may eventually burst as a catastrophic thunder cloud. Some even say they can hear the distant roar of the approaching storm. But we shall wait till our next. (*Specially contributed by Prof. Pramathanath Mukhopadhyaya.*)

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**Proceedings of**  
**The Legislative Assembly**

**The Council of State**

**And**

**The Provincial Councils**

**July—December 1934**



# THE COUNCIL OF STATE

AUTUMN SESSION—SIMLA—8th AUGUST to 6th SEPTEMBER 1934

The autumn session of the Council of State opened at Simla on the 8th. August 1934 with *Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy* in the chair.

After interpellations and formal business, Mr. *Stewart's* motion for election of a committee of the council of nine members in pursuance of the resolution on the subject of the Ottawa Trade Agreement being adopted, the House adjourned.

## PUSA RESEARCH INSTITUTE

9th. AUGUST :—Non-official resolutions were discussed by the Council to-day. There was considerable stir in the lobby over the adjournment motion of Mr. *Hossain Imam* regarding the proposal to remove the Agricultural Research Institute at Pusa to a site near Delhi. It appeared that there were good many members who were willing to support the motion but as they had not enough material before them they wanted postponement of them. The opinion of the Leader of the House seemed to be that the Government had made up their mind on the subject and the approval of the Secretary of State had been obtained. So no useful purpose would be served by deferring the discussion. Non-officials knew what the fate of the motion would be if it were pressed to division. So they wanted time to prepare themselves so that it could be talked out. But when the question came before the Members on the floor of the House after question hour which was rather dull the President announced that it would be discussed at 4 p. m. or as soon as other business of the House was finished.

## COLONISATION OF SURPLUS POPULATION

On the first resolution of the first non-official day the House divided and the resolution moved by Mr. *Hossain Imam* recommending representation to His Majesty's Government for setting apart a colony for emigration of surplus population of India was rejected by 27 to 9 votes.

## INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Mr. *P. N. Saprú* withdrew his resolution after a hot debate and a favourable reply from Sir *Fazli Hussain* recommending to the press of the Union Government to take adequate steps in accordance with the spirit of 1932 to secure advancement of the Indians residing in South Africa in view of the fact that the recommendations of the colonisation enquiry committee do not serve the interests of the South African Indians. The motion received the unanimous support of the Council.

## INDIANS IN BURMA

The debate on Mr. *P. C. D. Chari's* resolution urging His Majesty's Government to secure to Indians in Burma, if separated, adequate safeguards on the lines recommended by Mr. *Harper* and the Indian delegates from Burma on the Joint Select Committee and to secure the rights of citizenship, trade, profession or occupation on the same footing as enjoyed by any other British subject, was not concluded when Mr. *Hossain Imam's* adjournment motion regarding the transfer of the Pusa Agricultural Research was taken up.

## PUSA RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Although fifteen members participated in the discussion, it could not be talked out and was ultimately defeated. The main arguments adduced in favour of the transfer were that Pusa was an unknown place and inaccessible. Birar being in the earthquake zone, it was not safe to rebuild the institute there. Moreover, a central institute was meant for the benefit of the whole of India and should therefore be centrally located. The House then adjourned till the 13th.



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## DOCK LABOURERS' BILL

13th. AUGUST :—Seven Bills passed by the Assembly were on the agenda along with several amendments when the Council of State assembled this morning. Warm support was accorded by several members to the bill protecting dock labourers against accidents, urging the Government to put pressure on Indian States to come into line with British India in this respect. *Mr. Stewart*, Government spokesman, assured the House that all possible steps would be taken to point out the desirability of this measure to maritime States.

*Mr. Gladstone*, member, Calcutta Port Trust, proposed an amendment to change the name of the bill to Port Labourers' Act on the ground that there were no docks in any Indian port except the ports of Bombay and Calcutta.

*Mr. Stewart*, opposing, said that the generally accepted term for persons carrying the occupation of loading and unloading ships was dock labourers which need not be changed. The amendment was rejected and the bill was passed.

## OTHER BILLS

The House also passed without making any amendment the following bills which had been passed by the Legislative Assembly : The bill giving effect to convention for the unification of certain rules relating to international carriage by air, the bill amending the Sea Customs Act, the bill making better provision for the control of manufacture, possession, use, operation, sale, import and export of aircraft.

*Sir Alan Parsons* moved that the bill providing the imposition and collection of excise duty on mechanical lighters be taken into consideration. *Mr. Banerji* and *Mr. Mehrotra* opposed the bill on the ground that it sought to impose duty on an industry which had not even been born. *Sir A. Parsons* said that it was desirable to impose duty at this stage rather than allow the industry to take birth with unreal stimulus. The motion for consideration was passed and the House adjourned.

## MECHANICAL LIGHTERS' BILL.

14th. AUGUST :—The House took up the consideration of the Mechanical Lighters Bill clause by clause. *Mr. Mehrotra* moved an amendment reducing the excise duty to Re. 1. *Sir Alan Parsons*, opposing, assured the House that if after this bill was passed it was found that the duty of Rs. 1-8 was excessive the Government would lower the duty, but if the duty be found too low, the Government would increase it.

The amendment was lost and the Bill was passed in the same form in which the Assembly had passed it.

## THE FACTORIES BILL

The bill amending certain enactments and repealing certain other enactments was passed without any discussion.

*Mr. Mitchell* moved that the bill consolidating and amending the law regulating labour in factories be taken into consideration. Several members congratulated the Government for bringing forward the legislation. *Sir K. V. Menon* wanted the bill to have a provision for ensuring the education of children of workers. *Lala Jagadish Prasad* suggested that Indian States should conform themselves to the general principles of this legislation. *Mr. Hossain Imam* said that the bill was good, but came too late. *Sir N. Choksy* took the opportunity of speaking disapprovingly of labour conditions in the Soviet Russia and warned Indian labourers not to be misled to holding strikes.

*Sir F. Noyce* thanked the House for cordially receiving the bill. He said education being provincial transferred subject, no provision could be made for ensuring education of labourers' children. In fixing the hours of work the Government held the scale evenly among so many interests and merely followed the recommendations of the Royal Commission. Several Indian States were in line with the Government of India, but the Government were considering how to impress on others the desirability of being up-to-date in labour legislation.

*Mr. Ramsaran Das* said that restrictions proposed on the industries through the bill were inopportune, particularly in case of the Punjab where production per labourer was lesser than in case of Bombay and Allahabad. He, however, did not oppose the bill.



The consideration motion was passed and about a dozen amendments were moved by Mr. *Mehrotra* and Mr. *Sapru* for *inter alia* extending the benefits of the bill to factories employing five or more workers, further reducing the hours of work and minimising the effect of proposals in the bill on factory owners. All amendments were opposed by the Government and rejected.

At the third reading stage Mr. *Miller* emphasized that the Government of India should see that this legislation was administered in such a way that it did not cause unnecessary hardship on any factory owner. Mr. *Ramsaran Das* prophesied that this law would retard the industrial development of the country. Mr. *Sapru*, while expressing general sympathy with the main provisions, stated that the bill did not go far enough towards reduction of hours of work. Mr. *Hossain Imam* complimented Sir F. Noyce for putting on the statute book more legislation for the benefit of the labourer than any of his predecessors.

The bill as passed by the Assembly was passed and the House adjourned.

#### ASSESSMENT OF HOUSE PROPERTY

**15th. AUGUST:—***Rai Bahadur Lala Jagdish Prasad* moved a resolution recommending that incometax be levied in the case of the house property on the actual income derived by the assessee and not on the annual letting value of the property and that for this purpose the income-tax law should be suitably amended if necessary. He said it was unjust that while the trader should be assessed on the actual profits the house owner should pay income-tax on the annual letting value whether it be realized or not. Sir *Mohammad Akbar Khan*, supporting the resolution, criticised the methods of assessment of the incometax authorities.

Sir *Alan Parsons* said that in 1921 a strong incometax committee recommended that no alteration of the present law be made on the lines recommended by the mover. In England the suggestion for assessing on the actual income was let down 15 years ago. The proposition could not be accepted as the door of evasion of income tax would thereby be made wide open. Even if it were accepted it would be difficult for Government to find the actual rental realised by the owner as many owners did not keep accounts. Government had considerably helped house-owners by their notification on the subject whereby if a man failed to realise the rental he was exempt from tax. If that notification had not served its purpose he would be prepared to get it examined by the Central Board of Revenue.

*Lala Ramsarandas* described difficulties of the house-owners in letting out their property and satisfying the incometax authorities and said by accepting the resolution Government would be doing the house-owners justice which, was long overdue. *Rai Bahadur Lala Jagdish Prasad*, replying to the debate, said no useful purpose would be served if he pressed the resolution to a division in view of the Government majority in the House. He therefore begged leave to withdraw, which was granted.

#### NEW BUILDING FOR COUNCIL IN SIMLA

*Rai Bahadur Mathura Prasad Mehrotra* moved a resolution recommending the building in Simla of a council chamber for the Council of State near the Assembly chamber. He complained of what he called stepnotherly treatment being meted out to them by the allotment of a hall in the Viceregal Lodge.

Mr. *Mehrotra* said that under the present arrangement the Council had no arrangements, no party rooms, no library of their own and not even a notice room. He hoped that Government would not put forward financial difficulties as an argument against the building of the chamber as when they desired to spend money they always had it, as in the case of the transfer of the Agricultural Research Institute to Delhi.

Mr. *Mitchell* said the difficulty of a notice room could be met by their handing the papers to the secretary at the chamber instead of going to the Legislative department. He was sure the mover did not need the aid of library as he was successfully able to draw on his own resources. He suggested that the mover should place before the House committee his difficulties aforesaid.

Mr. *Mehrotra* withdrew the resolution.

#### PARSI MARRIAGE DIVORCE AMEND. BILL

Sir *Phiroze Sethna* introduced the bill amending the law relating to marriage and divorce among Parsis. The House then adjourned.

## THE BENGAL CRIMINAL LAW AMEND BILL

**16th. AUGUST :—**The Bengal Criminal Law Amend Bill, providing for indefinite continuation of the detention camp at Deoli, was discussed in the Council of State today with a poor unofficial attendance. Mr. *M. G. Hallet*, Home Secretary, emphasised that the necessity of making the provision permanent lay in the fact that temporary legislation was found to be of very little use in dealing with terrorism. He denied that it was a repressive measure and said that the provision of a camp outside Bengal was necessary in order to keep away dangerous terrorists who otherwise might contaminate the less dangerous ones by being jailed within the province. As a proof of the Government's care with which the terrorists were detained the Home Secretary statistically showed how, out of 806 cases only in six, two High Court Judges (of whom one was an Indian) did not agree. At Deoli conditions had been rendered similar to those in Bengal. Mr. *V. V. Kalikar* emphasised the necessity of stamping out terrorism, but asked why such measures had failed to achieve the object. Was it, as was alleged in the Bengal Council, that they were applied with torture? It was apparent there was something wrong.

Before the discussion proceeded, the *President* cleared the ground of the amendment tabled by Mr. *M. P. Mehrotra*, seeking a Select Committee of the House on the Bill. It was true, said the President, that in the case of this Bill there was no Select Committee in the Assembly and so, under Rule 29, Mr. Mehrotra could press for it. But the House of Lords rarely exercised such privilege and as one who had been connected with the Council of State since 1921, Sir Maneckji Dada-bhoy thought that the privilege had not been exercised till now.

Mr. *Mehrotra*, defining his own position, said that when such a measure was sought to be placed permanently on the Statute Book and when it infringed the right of habeas corpus it was open to the House to sit calmly in Select Committee and come to terms with the Government as to the period of the Bill.

*Pandit P. N. Sapru* strongly opposed the Bill as not giving the detenus even those few safeguards which the Rowlatt Committee had suggested. His attitude of the opposition would be the same, whether the Bill was permanent or limited to any period of time. Sending the detenus outside the province amounted to transportation and it ought to be made possible to detain them within Bengal with conditions different from those of jail life. Courageous political and economical reforms alone would meet the situation.

**18th. AUGUST :—**Resuming the debate on the Bengal Detenus' Bill in the Council to-day, Sir *Phiroze Sethna*, while considering that the measure was necessary, felt that he could not support its becoming permanent, as terrorism could never be killed by making the bill permanent. He also reminded the House that Congressmen were coming into the legislatures and that if they had a majority they would move for the repeal of such laws. If, however, the Government made the life of the bill three years then even Congressmen would not like to repeal it. The Government could renew the bill after that period if terrorism did not subside.

*Nawab Sir M. A. Khan* of Hoti criticised the speeches of Sir G. H. Hidayatullah and Saiyad Raza Ali and did not believe in fighting the superior authorities to force the pace of the reforms. He said that the zemindar class was for all times the backbone of the Government and this class should be rewarded by the Government so that it might effectively deal with terrorism. He believed that the Government would repeal the law when the necessity ceased to exist.

Sir *N. Choksy* urged the necessity of eradicating terrorism not only by dealing directly with the suspects, but also indirectly by carrying reforms in education and by other measures.

Mr. *M. P. Mehrotra* said that he could support only constitutional methods in dealing with terrorists. He did not feel that it was constitutional to inflict a punishment next to death, namely, transportation on mere suspects. Terrorism would at once be given up if the Government introduced the reforms not on the lines of the White Paper, but on the lines of the recommendations of Indian representatives before the Joint Parliamentary Committee; imparted religious education and penalised celibacy beyond, say, twenty years in the case of boys and sixteen years in the case of girls.

Mr. *Hallet*, replying to the debate, thanked the members because all had urged some steps for dealing with terrorism. He said that the measures taken to deal with the menace were those tried before with this difference that the Government

now proposed to take permanent powers. Terrorism started with Bengal partition. It did not die when the partition was annulled. It did not die when the reforms were introduced in 1921. He doubted whether it would die with the introduction of the new reforms which he hoped would come into being in 1935 or 1936. The anxiety of Lord Willingdon and of every member of the Government for an early introduction of the reforms was well known. The Bengal Government were trying to remedy the root causes, but they must also give criminal powers in the hands of the Executive in order to deal with the menace. The law was needed till the movement was stamped out beyond hope of its revival in future.

The Bill was taken into consideration without a division.

Mr. J. C. Banerjee moved an amendment limiting the life of the Bill to a further period of four years.

Mr. Mehrotra supported it, but the House rejected the amendment without a division. Mr. Hallett moved that the Bill, as passed by the Assembly, be passed. After Pandit P. N. Saprú and Mr. Mehrotra recorded their dissent, the House divided and the Bill was passed by 27 votes to 25. The House then adjourned till the 20th.

#### ASSAM CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL

20th. AUGUST :—Mr. M. G. Hallett moved that the Bill supplementing the Assam Criminal Law Amendment Act be taken into consideration. In showing the necessity of passing the Bill he went through the ground already traversed by the Home Member in the Assembly. He said that the terrorists were using Assam as an area for obtaining money by dacoities and mail robberies in order to carry on terrorism in Bengal. It was, therefore, necessary to empower the Government of Assam to nip the nefarious designs in the bud. The Government had been very careful in using the powers given in the Bill. This was clear from the fact that so far it had been applied to two districts adjoining Bengal and only seven persons arrested under it. The Sessions Judges to whom these seven cases were referred were of the opinion that there was sufficient ground for passing the orders.

Mr. Barua (an elected member from Assam) expressed satisfaction that terrorism was not being practised by any Assamese. It was for preventing the spread of the evil amongst the Assamese that the Government should be armed with the powers included in the Bill. The suspension of 'habeas corpus' was a drastic measure in the Bill, but he considered it necessary in the larger interests of the country. He hoped that the Government would not keep the bill on the Statute Book longer than was absolutely necessary.

Mr. M. P. Mehrotra opined that this Bill was the big brother of the Bengal Detenus Bill. Political dacoities had been committed in almost all the Provinces, but why should the Assam Government alone be given drastic powers? The Penal Code was sufficient to deal with cases arising out of and preventing such dacoities.

Mr. V. V. Kalikar wanted to know whether there was an emergency in Assam which required such legislation. Pandit P. N. Saprú declared that the powers given to the accused to appeal to the High Court were of no use.

Mr. Hallett, replying to the debate, pointed out the difficulty of the Government in debating such Bills as they could not put all the cards on the table. He agreed with Mr. Mehrotra that there had not been very many dacoities but they had taken place over a small area. Assam had taken as drastic powers as Bengal because the one and the same organisation which worked in Bengal was working in Assam. He assured the House that, wherever possible, the Government did prosecute the offenders under the ordinary law. The motion was passed.

During the consideration of the Bill clause by clause two amendments were moved. Lala Jagadish Prasad's amendment deleting clause 3, which curtailed the powers of the High Court under Section 491 Cr. P. C. was defeated by thirty-two against six votes. Mr. Mehrotra's amendment extending the life of the Bill to a period not exceeding three years was rejected without a division. There was a very short debate on the third reading of the Bill when Mr. Saprú and Mr. Kalikar recorded their dissent to the Bill. The Bill was eventually passed in the form in which it emerged from the Assembly. The House then adjourned till the 22nd.

#### REVISION OF SARDA CT

22nd. AUGUST :—Lala Jagadish Prasad moved the first resolution, recommending that steps be taken including a revision of the law, if necessary, to enforce more rigidly the provisions of the Child Marriage Restraint Act, so as to increase the chances of offenders being brought to book and minimise the chances of evasion

of the law. Lala Jagadish Prasad observed regretfully that the Act was being observed more in breach than in observance and it appeared to be nobody's concern to see that it was enforced.

*Nawab Sir Akbar Khan* was prepared to support the resolution provided it concerned only Hindus and did not touch Muslims whose religious law was against such legislation. The *Maharaja of Darbhanga* strongly opposed the resolution and far from the Act being enforced urged its repeal because it had already set orthodox Hindus and Muslims against the Government who were disregarding proclamations of religious neutrality. Pandit *P. N. Saprú* described child marriage as amounting to suicide and said that if the British Government had abolished the 'suttee' they might as well prevent child marriages. Mr. *M. G. Hallet*, Home Secretary, said that history had proved that in such matters "more haste means worse speed" and it was far better to adopt the slogan "slow advance is the most sure advance." This was the Government's position. *Lala Jagadish Prasad* withdrew the resolution in view of the Government's attitude.

#### ASSAMESE IN POSTAL DEPT.

Mr. *Barua* moved a resolution urging Government to take steps to secure larger proportion of appointments for Assamese in the Posts and Telegraphs Departments in Assam. The resolution was adopted.

#### MEDICAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE HEALTH

*Sir Nusarwanji Choksey* moved a resolution urging Government to associate a small committee of medical experts to investigate the conditions of health of the population when the economic census was undertaken in view of the scheme devised by Professors Bowley and Robertsen. Sir *Allan Parsons* agreed on behalf of Government that the economic well-being of India was inter-connected with the help of the people. The resolution was withdrawn.

#### BURMANISATION OF POSTAL STAFF

Mr. *Chari* (Rangoon) moved a resolution for Burmanisation, with all convenient speed, of the staff of the Accountant General's office in Burma and the Posts and Telegraph offices in Burma. Mr. *Mitchell*, Industries Secretary, accepted the resolution. He said that the work in this department was onerous, and Burmans had not been forthcoming in sufficient numbers. The resolution was passed.

#### NATIONAL DEBTS

Mr. *Hossain Imam* moved a resolution recommending formation of a committee of experts and members of the Council to enquire and report on the national debts burden of foreign obligations and ways and means of reducing them and to suggest improvements and modifications in the present method of raising loans in India and abroad. At the request of Government, debate on the resolution was postponed.

#### PARSI MARRIAGE DIVORCE BILL

On the motion of *Sir Phiroze Selhna* the bill amending the law relating to marriage and divorce among Parsis was circulated for eliciting public opinion by January 15, 1935.

27th. AUGUST :—The Council of State held a short sitting to-day and passed the *Rubber Control Bill* and *Income-tax Amendment Bill* as passed by the Assembly without any division and amendment. The House then adjourned.

#### INDIA'S NATIONAL DEBT

28th. AUGUST :—The Council assembled this morning to dispose of non-official business. The House started the postponed debate on Mr. *Hossain Imam's* resolution, recommending the appointment of a committee of experts and members of the House to enquire into and report on the national debt and burden of foreign obligations and ways and means of reducing them and to suggest improvements and modifications in the present method of raising loans in India and abroad. He said that when the future of India came to be under consideration it would be important to bring this matter before the Indian public and the British Parliament. In the matter of the debt position of India and how it was to be reduced the White Paper scheme was not satisfactory. During the last 20 years India's trade balance was in the neighbourhood of Rs. 7,26 crores and her foreign obligations in sterling were about Rs. 1,76 crores. This was a great burden on India's exchequer.



In the matter of internal debt, Government was functioning as a sort of clearing house. It was the purchasing power of the country which measured the true position with regard to debt. As a means of reducing foreign obligations, he suggested the earmarking of the Reserve Bank profits for the sinking fund, expansion of currency, payment of salaries of foreign officers in sterling instead of in rupees and further reduction in army by negotiating with England and by obtaining generous treatment from England.

*Sir James Grigg* said that he agreed with the speaker that the matter under discussion was now of great importance on the advent of reforms. He said the facts about the debts of India were well-known and the total debt of India on March 31, 1923, was Rs. 882 crores, of these Rs. 638 crores were covered by interest, yielding assets and Treasury Balance of Rs. 45 crores and debts uncovered by assets amounts to Rs. 204 crores. On March 1, 1934 the debts covered by interest yielding assets amounted to Rs. 977 and a half crores, cash balance Rs. 27 crores, debts uncovered by assets Rs. 208 crores. During eleven years there had been an increase in debt of Rs. 330 crores, but the increase in unproductive debt was only Rs. 4 crores. Nearly twothirds of the total debt was railway capital and it showed of what importance was the prosperity of Indian railways to the future credit position of India. Continuing *Sir James Grigg* dealt with the question of the burden of foreign obligations and ways and means of reducing them. He said that on March 31, 1923 India's foreign obligations amounted to 304 million sterling and on March 31, 1934 they amounted to 384 million sterling. In this period more than £100 million of railways' capital had been incurred. So far as the unproductive debt was concerned, in this period of 11 years, there had been an appreciable repatriation. The policy of the Government of India was to repatriate their debt whenever possible, which was possible only if there was strong confidence in the credit and currency policy of India and if the balance of trade was favourable. He opined that the best method of creating a favourable balance of trade, was by stimulating exports (cheers). There was a good deal of misconception about the foreign capital in India and he agreed with foreign experts who gave evidence before the Central Banking Enquiry Committee that for good many years to come India needed all foreign capital she could make use of with the speaker's proviso, namely, so long as foreign capital did not get excessive returns.

Turning to the question of suggesting improvements and modifications in the present method of raising loans in India, *Sir James Grigg* reiterated that the most important factor in raising loans was the credit of India which at present was extremely high but the decision for floatation of loans must rest with the executive Government, as was the case in every solvent country of the world.

As regards the sterling debts, Government had received the greatest co-operation and advice from the Bank of England and the Government of India's sterling loans have been raised recently on slightly better terms than the rupee loans in India. He opposed the resolution.

After *Sir Alan Parsons* had briefly replied, the motion was put to vote and the resolution was rejected.

#### CUSTOMS DUTY

*Mr. Hossain Imam* next moved for the imposition of the same customs duties on all foreign goods entering British India from land frontiers as was levied at British Indian ports. *Mr. Hossain Imam* said when India's finance were at a low ebb there should not be any loop hole left through which they would lose customs revenue. *Mr. T.A. Stewart* replying said that the question was now receiving consideration of the Government of India and at this stage he could not make any statement but if the mover liked, the speaker would forward his speech to the department concerned. The resolution was withdrawn.

#### REPRESSIVE LAWS AGAINST CONGRESS

*Sir Phiroze Sethna* next moved the resolution recommending the Government that 'repressive legislation enacted to meet Civil Disobedience be not re-enacted after the expiry of its time limit, provided that in the meanwhile Civil disobedience is not revived.' He referred to the change in the Congress programme which change, he opined, was really a return to those normal methods of constitutional work and the agitation and activity which the Congress discarded in 1920. The country was glad of the Government's response so far to this change of the Congress policy and hoped that *Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru* also would be released. The

resolution, however, had nothing to do with 'measures passed to stamp out the terrorist movement.

Mr. *P. N. Saprú* supporting the motion said that the steps taken by Government in dealing with civil disobedience were far in excess of the requirements and there was no reason why the Government should not make a declaration now that those measures would not be re-enacted, particularly, when the Viceroy had almost dictatorial powers whereby he could at any time issue ordinances.

*Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah* said the mover forgot that it was an emergency power taken in the Bombay Act, which effectively dealt with civil disobedience, terrorism and communism.

*Sir Henry Craik* said that the Acts sought to be repealed by the resolution were the Central Act, the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1932 and provincial Acts for Bombay, Bengal, the United Provinces, the Punjab, Bihar and Orissa and the North-West Frontier Province. Most of the provincial Acts empowered the Governments to check picketing, mock funeral ceremonies, non-payment of taxes and restrict movements of persons who have 'acted, are acting or are about to act in a manner prejudicial to public safety and peace', and detain such persons into custody. The Central Act had special provisions, most important of them being, relation to the press. The mover asked the Government to predict now a state of the country 16 months hence. This was a tall order. The Home Member referred to the various statements of Mahatma Gandhi and other Congress leaders to show that civil disobedience had only been suspended and not permanently abandoned. Moreover, when the central enactment was under discussion, it was stated by Government that their intention was to make it a permanent measure and the House must remember that these measures were not directed against civil disobedience alone but also against terrorism and communism, that powers regarding control of press were necessary and become apparent when early in 1931 the Press Ordinance was withdrawn, press organs which the Ordinance had silenced reappeared and began openly to preach revolution and praise terrorism and foment communal agitation.

After further discussion the resolution was negatived by eight votes against 26.

#### HINDU LAW OF INHERITANCE BILL

Mr. *Charì* introduced the bill amending the Hindu Law of Inheritance entitling women to certain rights to property of joint Hindu family and to share of inheritance on partition.

#### INDIANIZATION OF ARMY

Mr. *Saprú* moved the resolution recommending retention of Viceroy's commission in the Indianized units of army. He said, the result of elimination of Viceroy's commissioned officers from the Indianized army would be that while on paper the Government would be able to show increased Indianization but in actual fact the reverse would be the case.

Moreover, the proposal would not be sound financially. He opposed Indianization of certain units but wanted Indianization to proceed simultaneously in all units of army as in that case only, a commission in the army would be popular amongst Indians and the best type of Indians would be available and the scheme would prove a success. The House then adjourned till 1st. Sept.

#### THE PETROLEUM BILL

1st. SEPTEMBER :—Questions being over, on the motion of Mr. *Mitchell* the bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the import, transport, storage, production, refining and blending of petroleum and other inflammable substances was taken up for consideration and passed without any changes.

#### STEEL PROTECTION BILL

Mr. *F. W. Stewart* then moved that the Steel Bill as passed by the Assembly be taken up for consideration. Mr. *P. N. Saprú* made a long speech objecting to the principle of excise duty levied under the bill on steel ingots and observed that such excise duty should be announced only at the time of the budget. *Sir Joseph Bhoré* explained that in formulating the scheme of protection, interest of all concerned had been carefully balanced. The President postponed further discussion till the 3rd.



**3rd. SEPTEMBER :—**In the Council of State the Steel Protection Bill was discussed for the whole of the day, and was passed at five in the evening. A sensational development occurred at the final phase of the second reading of the Bill, when the Progressive Party led by Lala Ramsaran Das and followed by Messrs. Hossain Imam, V. V. Kalikar, P. N. Saprú, J. C. Banerjee and M. P. Mehrotra walked out as a protest against the action of the President in ruling out the amendment tabled by Pandit P. N. Saprú.

This amendment was to the effect that every notification, issued under clause 2 of the Bill, shall be laid before both the Chambers of the Legislature as soon as it is made and shall cease to have effect on the expiry of two months from the date on which it has been laid before either Chamber. The President held that this amendment was impracticable and unworkable. Thereupon six members of the Progressive Party walked out. The Bill was passed without further discussion.

#### INDIANISATION OF ARMY

**5th. SEPTEMBER :—**The discussion was resumed on Pandit P. N. Saprú's resolution urging non-abolition of Viceroy's Commissions in Indianised units of the army. Mr. Hossain Imam said that if the Viceroy's Commissions were not abolished they could Indianise in officers' ranks a greater number of regiments than if they were abolished.

Mr. Ramsaran Das, coming from the Punjab, which he reminded was the sword-hand of the British Empire, said that the abolition of Viceroy's Commissions was undesirable on sentimental grounds. There were valuable traditions of gallantry associated with these Viceroy's Commissioned Officers. He related the account he heard from a British Officer, who served in Arabia, how it was the Subedar-Major who drew the attention to the defects in certain instructions and plans were altered. If the Viceroy's Commissions were abolished the pace of Indianisation would be slackened.

The *Commander-in-Chief* replying made an outspoken speech. He spoke generally on the question of Indianisation and referred occasionally to the plea for non-abolition of Viceroy's Commissions. He said that the objective voyage of the ship of Indianisation had been given to him by the Government of India, supported by His Majesty's Government with instructions. Were they to alter the course of the ship at the behest of those who had little or no knowledge of navigation? What right had the mover and his friends to criticise so glibly a policy adopted by the Government on the considered advice of men, who spent the whole of their lives in profession of arms and who had no political axe to grind? It was easy for a politician, who was in no way responsible for the policy, to criticise from his armchair or the floor of the political assembly.

Who would be the first to cry out if riot like there at Agra affected the safety of their homes and efficient troops were not available to put them down? It was easy to say that the recommendations of the sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference as regards the Indianisation had in no way been fulfilled. Have the mover and his friends ever heard the whine of the bullet down a frontier valley? Have they seen faces going blank when death in ugly shapes is taking a toll of their ranks? Then, who are they to say in what manner the Government should train young officers in the Indian Army? Did the members of the Opposition think that officers of this sort should be created over-night by a stroke of pen or by speeches of politicians or of the Minority Report by somebody or other on the Committee? "Does he or his friends think that a war-worn and war-wise nation like the British, who had won their Empire at the point of the sword and have kept it by sword all these years, are to be turned aside by armchair critics when we are taking greatest experiment in history and when we are still responsible for the consequence of that experiment to the millions of people in India? If you aim at the national army and not the hybrid army, there is no other course than that now

pursued." Continuing Sir Philip Chetwode said that it was obvious that new non-commissioned officers, who under the old regime might have hoped to reach the rank of the Viceroy's commissioned officers, will not do so now. Fifty per cent of vacancies in the Indian Sandhurst are now open to these non-commissioned officers, and they are still eligible for the Viceroy's commissions in all units not specially told off for Indianisation.

As a result of reservation of fifty per cent of vacancies in the academy for enlisted classes, they will obtain in the aggregate nearly as many commissions as

they now receive. But these commissions will carry a higher status of pay and pension, and instead of the Indian soldier being merely able to aspire to honorary captaincy at the most, he will now aspire to the highest rank. Concluding Sir Philip Chetwode said: "We are trying to start the new army with pride in itself, and some of our critics are doing all they can to make it ashamed of itself. Is it too much to hope for more co-operation in the forming of your own new army and less of suspicious criticism?"

*Mr. Sapru* replying characterised the Commander-in-chief's speech as provocative and he thought it would have serious repercussions in the country. It was a pity, he said, that it was not realised that in the expression "irresponsible people" talking glibly of Indianisation were included persons like Sir Abdur Rahim, Sir Shivaswami Ayyar and Diwan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar. All the world over democratic institutions were composed of experts on one side and amateurs on the other and if the Government were impatient of non-official criticisms why not shut down the Council of State. In no other country a vital change in the Army would have been made without reference to Parliament. One of the objects of elimination of the Viceroy's commission, *Mr. Sapru* said, was to retard the progress of Indianisation.

*Sir Fazli Hussain* explaining what the Commander-in-chief meant observed that to ascribe motive to the military authorities as *Mr. Sapru* did was a dangerous statement. In 1931 when the matter was decided it was a live issue but it was too late in the day now for any Member to adversely criticise it.

*Mr. Sapru's* resolution was eventually defeated by 25 to 11 votes.

#### NON-OFFICIAL RESOLUTIONS

*Mr. Hosain Imam's* resolution recommending that presidents of legislatures, central and provincial,—judges of High Courts, members of the Public Services Commission, Tariff Board and Ministers in the provinces should, after retirement, be declared ineligible for service under the Crown was rejected by the Council.

*Syed Raza Ali's* resolution stating that the subjects of those Indian States which passed orders against employment of British Indian subject in the services of aforesaid States should not be eligible for appointment by selection to any post under the Government of India or for sitting at any competitive examinations for recruitment to Indian services or central services classes 1 and 2, was withdrawn. The Council then adjourned.

#### INDIANISATION OF ARMY

**6th. SEPTEMBER :—**After prolonged discussion the Army Amendment Bill was passed by the Council of State by 26 to 8 votes. Pandit *P. N. Sapru* and *Mr. M. P. Mehrotra* desired to move an amendment exactly similar to the one moved in the Assembly by *Sir Abdur Rahim* and objected to by the Government, but held in order by the President, *Sir R. K. Sanmukham Chetty* and finally rejected there by a majority of three votes.

In the Upper House, however, the President, *Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy*, gave a ruling on the amendment which ran counter to that of *Sir Shanmukham Chetty* and finally disallowed it. In one of the lengthiest rulings ever given in the Council of State the President held that the effect of the amendment if passed would be that the senior commissioned officers would have the right of command over the junior British officers who were governed by the British Army Act.

Before the *Commander-in-Chief* replied to the debate, he withdrew his remarks made on the previous day, in the course of which he characterised the non-official members as "irresponsible talkers." The *Commander-in-Chief* controverted the non-official opinion that the Bill was designed to introduce racial discrimination and effect segregation or that it meant to germinate a sense of inferiority in the minds of the young officers who were coming out of Dehra Dun.

#### NAVY DISCIPLINE BILL

The Navy Discipline Bill, as passed by the Assembly, met with an easy passage, *Rai Bahadur M. P. Mehrotra* being the only non-official speaker. The consequential measure on the Navy Discipline Bill, as passed by the Assembly, was also passed. The House then adjourned *sine die*.

# The Legislative Assembly

FINAL SESSION—SIMLA—16th JULY to 31st AUGUST 1934

## BENGAL CRIMINAL LAW AMEND. BILL

The final session of the present Legislative Assembly met at Simla on the 16th, July 1934 with Sir *Sanmukham Chetty* in the chair. The attendance was far from satisfactory.

After formal business Sir *Harry Haig* introduced a short two-clause bill extending the operation of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment (Supplementary) Act of 1932.

The statement of objects and reasons of the bill says the present Act empowers the local Government, with the previous sanction of the Governor-General-in-Council, to make an order committing to custody in jail outside Bengal any person against whom an order under sub-section (1) of section 2 of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1930 might be made. The Supplementary Act will expire on April, 1935, while the 1930 Act which would originally have expired in 1935, has been now made permanent. The Government of India, in agreement with the Bengal Government, consider that in order to deal effectively with the terrorist movement, the time-limit of 1935 in the Act should be removed.

## ASSAM CRIMINAL LAW AMEND. BILL

The Assam Criminal Law Amendment (Supplementary) Act, 1934, was introduced by the *Home Member*.

The statement of objects and reasons of the bill lays down that section 15 of the Assam Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1934, purports to give jurisdiction to the Calcutta High Court to entertain appeals from persons convicted under the Act. Section 29 of the Act purports, inter alia, to bar the exercise in respect of persons arrested or detained under the Act of powers exercisable by the Legislative Assembly.

## THE PETROLEUM BILL

Sir *Frank Noyce* moved for reference in Select Committee the Petroleum Bill. Referring to the opinion of the Burma Government and Burma Oil interests Sir Frank Noyce said that Government could not go to the whole length of accepting the suggestions from Burma, but would be prepared to make oil mining operation subject to the provisions of the Burma Oil Fields Act. The definition of petroleum would also be examined.

## ARMY ACT AMEND. BILL

Lt. Colonel A. F. R. Lumby, Army Secretary, moved that the bill amending the Army Act be referred to a Select Committee. It was proposed to put into an entirely new category the Indian Officers who would pass through the Dehra Dun Military Academy. Thus there would be three categories, firstly, British and Indian officers who passed through Sandhurst, secondly, a new type of Indian officers who passed through Dehra-dun and Viceroy's commissioned officers.

Sir *Abdur Rahim* asked whether the Army Act which was going to be amended would be entirely at the disposal of the Indian Legislature for future amendments and how long would it take to completely Indianise the army considering that after so many years only 160 commissions had gone to the Indians out of over six thousands.

Mr. B. Das opposed the Bill in toto and preferred its postponement until India knew what amount of control the Indian Government would have on the Army under the new Constitution.

Col. Lumby replied that this legislation could not wait for the next constitution, as a batch of officers were coming out of Dehra Dun at the end of this year. The fact that the Indian commissioned officer was placed on a different footing was one of the reasons why he had given a separate title in the proposed establishment in place of King's commissioned officers and Viceroy's commissioned officers. Finally he

said that it was true that the present output from Dehra Dun would be limited annually to sixty, but this figure had not been decided for all times and enhancement in the number of these commissioned officers would depend on officers who come out of Dehra Dun. Col. Lumby's motion for select committee on the Army Amendment Bill was accepted.

#### CARRIAGE BY AIR

Sir *Frank Noyce* moved for two select committees, one on the Bill to give effect to the convention for unification of certain rules relating to international carriage by air and the other on the Bill to make better provision for the control of manufacture, possession, use, operation, sale, import and export of aircraft. Both the motions were accepted. The House then adjourned.

#### THE FACTORIES BILL

**17th. JULY:—**The Assembly met to-day to consider the Factories Bill as reported by the Select Committee.

*Mr. Abdul Matin Chowdhury*, Deputy President, complained that suggestions in the select committee to improve the lot of the workers were not accepted. Smaller factories where the condition of labourers was more miserable did not fall within the purview of the Bill as the definition of "factory" was not widened. *Mr. Morgan* thought the Bill too wide in its application. *Mr. Dalal* suggested annual conference of the Directors of Public Health and Inspectors of Factories in the interest of workers' health. *Mr. Mody* congratulated Sir Frank Noyce on holding the balance of scales even between Capital and Labour. He explained how he induced the Bombay Mill-owners' Association and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries to accept the 54 hours week clause, but he regretted the attitude of Messrs. Joshi and Abdul Matin Choudhury in not appreciating the gesture of goodwill extended by the mill-owners. He asked the Government to exert its influence on Indian States to bring Labour conditions there in line with British India. *Diwan Lalchand Navalrai* was not happy over many of the provisions specially those relating to punishment. *Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed* suggested that the unemployment problem could to a certain extent be solved by reduction of hours of work. Sir *Abdur Rahim* stressed that industries could not flourish without improving the conditions of Labour, neither could Labour prosper by crippling the industries. Sir *Frank Noyce*, replying, the motion for consideration of the Bill was accepted. When the second reading of the Bill was taken up *Diwan Lal Chand Navalrai* moved an amendment seeking to widen the definition of the "factory" so that small factories might come under the operation of the Bill. Sir *Nripen Sircar* amidst loud cheers in his maiden speech objected saying that cottage industries would thereby be seriously handicapped. He considered that the factories employing less than 20 workers should be exempted.

*Diwan Lalchand Navalrai's* amendment and two other amendments proposed by *Mr. Abdul Matin Chowdhury* suggesting certain minor changes were lost. The House then adjourned after clauses one to four had been passed.

**18th JULY:—**After a prolonged debate the House finished the second reading of the Factories Bill to-day. The discussion was uninteresting and attendance of members after the interpellations was also very thin. Clauses five to 84 of the bill dealing with the inspection of factories, health and safety of labour, working hours and provisions for adolescents and children etc. were adopted without any substantial modifications. Majority of amendments moved by non-officials were negatived.

When the third reading of the bill was taken up, *Mr. B. Das* welcomed the bill as a salutary measure and observed that it was a land-mark in the history of Labour legislation in India. The House then adjourned.

**19th JULY:—**The House resumed the third reading of the Factories Bill to-day.

*Mr. Anklesaria* supporting the Bill wanted the Government to withdraw the prosecutions against factory-owners if it were found that the offence was a technical one.

*Mr. Morgan* also supported and urged the central Government to control effectively the rule-making powers of the local Governments.

*Mr. Jadhav* hoped that in due course more and more legislation of this nature would find a place on the statute book.



*Sir Abdur Rahim* suggested various directions in which the Government could help the labourers in particular in the matter of education.

*Dr. Ziauddin* said the Bill was inadequate as it touched only a handful of workers in factories as more than 90 per cent. of labourers were agricultural. More over, this Bill would widen the gulf between the employer and the labourer.

*Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer* congratulated Sir Frank Noyce on his successfully piloting this labour legislation.

*Mr. Lalchand Navalrai*, while admitting that the Bill was a good first instalment of the measures for improving the condition of labour, made a detailed examination of the several clauses to point the defects which he had unsuccessfully attempted to remedy by amendments.

*Mr. Mahapatra* expressed gratification at the passage of the Bill but gave in detail the deplorable condition of the labourers in India. In order to fortify his assertions he quoted from a book.

*Mr. B. Das* asked Sir Frank Noyce whether Mr. Mahapatra was not quoting from a book proscribed by the Government of India.

*Sir Frank Noyce* answered in the affirmative and drew the attention of the President.

*Mr. Mahapatra*: Sir, I have taken this book from the Assembly Library.

*Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury*, while deprecating that the legislative record of the Assembly during the last few years had not been a very happy one, congratulated Sir Frank Noyce on this legislation.

*Sir Frank Noyce* said the Government of India and the provincial Governments were in the process of collecting material for the third report to show what the Government had done to ameliorate the condition of labour. He drew the attention of the House to an article by the President of the Labour Commission published recently in the 'London Times' appreciating the progress made by the Indian Government in ameliorating the lot of labour in India. Turning to the Bill he said there was no reason why the local Governments in making rules would impose a meticulous uniformity in the case of all industries and not give special consideration to the industries which required special attention. He had no doubt if the rules made by a particular local Government worked to the disadvantage of another province, such a position would be set right by the central Government. As regards the powers of inspectors he saw no reason to believe that the inspectors would abuse their powers. In any case there was provision in the Bill for an aggrieved factory-owner to make appeal against the inspector's decisions. He informed Mr. Mody and other members that there were a large number of States which had followed the Government of India in regard to the introduction of labour legislation and which had acted more or less on the lines of the Indian Factories Act. Concluding he said the Government recognised the need for labour legislation but this Bill represented a very marked advance in the amelioration of labour troubles in the country.

The Bill was passed amidst cheers.

#### MECHANICAL LIGHTERS DETAIL

*Sir James Grigg* moved the Bill providing imposition in connection with excise duty on mechanical lighters be referred to a select committee for report by July 25. In a maiden speech he said it was the experience of other countries that the imposition of excise duty on matches gave abnormal stimulus to the manufacture or import of mechanical lighters with the result that other countries found it absolutely indispensable to take measures of this kind to protect revenue. A concrete example of this experience could be found in Burma where the import of mechanical lighters during the six months following the imposition of duty on matches had amounted to 150,000. The majority of opinions expressed on the Bill were either in favour or offered no comments at all. Some critics observed that the scope of definition was too wide and it would include toys. Sir James Grigg said he would be prepared to modify the definition to exclude toys from the definition. Concluding he remarked that he was only the stepfather of the Bill (laughter and applause). Stepfathers were generally hard with their step-children but he hoped to treat the child with a certain amount of cordiality (applause).

During the discussion that followed *Mr. B. Das* was the only uncompromising opponent to the Bill, which he described as unwanted. If the bill was necessary at all, he said, let there be revenue collected by means of a excise duty only to control the manufacture of lighters, but the money must be returned to the

manufacturers. Messrs. *Ghuznavi*, *Ranga Iyer* and *Muazzam* supported the measure being consequential on the passage of the Match Excise Bill. Messrs. *Gaya Prasad* and *Jadhav*, while supporting the import duty of Rs. 2 per lighter, objected to the excise duty on the mechanical lighter industry, which according to the Government admission did not exist.

*Sir James Grigg* warned the House that without such a duty the Match Excise Act would become ineffective. The bill was referred to a select committee. The Assembly then adjourned till the 23rd.

#### ASSAM FLOODS—OFFICIAL detail

23rd. July :—The Assembly met to-day to transact official business.

The havoc caused by the recent floods in Assam as furnished by the Assam Government was laid on the table of the House by Mr. *Bajpai* replying to Mr. *Matin Chaudhury's* short notice question. The statement ran as follows:—"From June 13 to 23 there was almost incessant rainfall in those hills and the rain gauge at Cherrapunji which overlooks the plains of Sylhet registered during the last three days of deluge a rainfall of over 21, 25 and 36 inches respectively both in Nowgong and in the north of Sylhet. The floods attained an unprecedented level. The areas affected are poor in communications. With the havoc caused by floods communication has become extremely difficult. The district officers have inspected the areas which were accessible areas. It will take sometime before the final reports are received from the latter. Meanwhile it is possible to imagine the conditions in the interior from the reports relating to the areas visited by the local officers. In Nowgong the area between the hills and Kooi was for most part submerged and cut off from the rest of the district. The Assam Bengal Railway Line running through this portion is breached and through communication is not likely to be resumed for the next two months. There are breaches in Chaparmukh-Silghat line and in a few public roads that served the affected areas the rise in water was so rapid that the utmost that the people could do was to save their lives and not of the many persons reported to have been drowned. But the number of cattle carried away by floods must be considerable. The total number of families who have nothing to live on is estimated to be about 12,000 to 15,000. Gratuitous relief will be needed in most of these cases for at least two months. It will be required longer in the case of those who live in parts which are very low lying in Sylhet. The effects of the floods were serious though not so disastrous as in Nowgong.

The Government of Assam are meeting the situation as best as they can apart from placing the relief work on a satisfactory basis. The efforts of local officers are concentrated on procuring cattle and seed so that as soon as water subsides people may be enabled to resow as extensive an area as possible. The deputy commissioner has been authorised to incur such expenditure as may be necessary for the immediate relief of the distressed. They have also sanctioned a sum of Rs. one lakh for agricultural loans in Nowgong and are awaiting the estimate of the amount needed for this purpose in Sylhet. They will in due course consider the proposals of suspension and remission of the Government dues. Facilities are being afforded to people to take timber free from the Government forests for reconstruction of houses. Relief Committee has been formed locally but in view of the financially depressed condition of the people it is feared the response will be poor.

His Excellency the Governor has placed at the disposal of each deputy commissioner concerned Rs. 10,000 out of the balance of 1929 Cachar Flood Relief Fund. The area affected is wide and the losses will run into lakhs without including the heavy expenditure which the Government must incur later in replacing cattle and seed grain. The minimum estimated requirements for gratuitous relief alone are a lakh and a half.

#### BENGAL CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL

*Sir Harry Haig* then moved for consideration of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment (supplementary) Bill. *Sir Harry* said there had been alarming rumours of portentous speeches in preparation over the weekend. He hoped that these rumours were not well-founded for the issues underlying the Bill were simple and familiar to the House. The Home Member said he was reminded of the debate two years ago following the second murderous attack on *Sir Alfred Watson* and an attempt at indiscriminate massacre of Europeans and Anglo-Indians at the Railway Institute at Pabartali. The House was deeply filled with a feeling of horror and shame. *Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer*, leader of the House, had said : 'I feel ashamed that the Indian should



have done this'. The spirit of the House on the occasion was : 'How can we help ? Sir Abdur Rahim, Leader of the Opposition, had said : 'If it were in the power of anyone of us or any group of this House to suppress this movement we would have done it. No one has been able to suggest what men like ourselves can do to help the administration. It is primarily for the Government to find out the remedy.' Sir Harry Haig agreed with the words that it was for the Government to devise the remedies but added that it was for the House to give the Government the help it needed. Sir Harry, continuing, said : 'It is natural that people feel very deeply on the occasion of an outrage of that kind. I would ask the House not to allow its feeling to cool too much and not to require any continuing stimulus of actual outrages to maintain their serious interest in this very acute problem.' As regards the nature of the Bill it makes the existing law permanent and removed the limitation of three years to the life of the Bill.

The necessity for the Bill had arisen because the Bengal legislation authorising detention without trial to which this Act was supplementary had been made permanent. The time limit for the existing Act expires in April 1935. It might be asked why the Government did not wait till the next session of the Assembly. That meant that the Bill could not be taken up till February or March.

*A Voice* :—Why not earlier ?

*Sir Harry Haig* :—Will the hon. member undertake to dispose of the matter before the end of January ? I know very well that the hon. member cannot give any such undertaking.

*A Voice* :—Why not ?

*Sir Harry Haig* :—Even so, that would be unsatisfactory solution. I would ask the hon. members to remember that we have at Deoli camp something like 500 detenus. It took us considerable time to prepare accommodation. The Government of Bengal have no accommodation for 500 men. It would be quite impossible for us to leave the Bengal Government in doubt and ourselves in doubt up to within a month or two of the expiry of these powers whether they are to be extended or not. Continuing, Sir Haig referred to the provisions of the Bill. Firstly, they wanted power to detain the detenus outside Bengal. This principle was accepted by the House in 1932 at a time when the implications and menace of terrorism were not so fully appreciated as they are now. Bengal could not be expected at the same time to wage a campaign against terrorism and keep in effective segregation such large numbers of dangerous men living in surroundings with which they were thoroughly familiar and a people with whom they have close relations. These detenus communicate with friends outside ; they hatch conspiracies. It was therefore necessary to move the worst of them to an isolated locality where these conditions did not exist. The total number of detenus in jails and special camps in Bengal was 1,500 to 1,600 while the number at Deoli was 500. Those in Deoli were of the worst type ; others were dealt with under an elastic system which included home domicile, village domicile, special camp or jail in Bengal.

Illustrating the experiences of Madras, the Home Member said that the jury had expressed surprise in the Madras Conspiracy Case that revolutionaries were allowed to influence certain of the accused.

Continuing, the Home Member said that the Bill barred the powers of the High Courts in respect of *habeas corpus*. This was an essential complement of the Bengal legislation. Continuing, Sir Harry reviewed the situation which had necessitated the removal of the time limit from Bengal Bill. He said that the Government had during the last fifteen months, by unrelenting pressure, been gradually getting control over the movement, first of all holding it and then making some impression on it. But with much that was encouraging, the Bengal Government at the beginning of the year felt that there was still much to be done. Recruitment was still going on, the spirit was still alive and active. In spite of a definite improvement they had still a long way to go ; there was the Chittagong attack on Europeans including women and children at a cricket match and the attempt on the life of the Bengal Governor at Darjeeling. These powers were now being made permanent. Time after time the temporary nature of the provisions had encouraged terrorists to hope that they only had to hold out for a limited time and would again get their chance. Conspiracy had been going on for nearly thirty years ; each time when conspiracy could be brought under control powers had been surrendered and the organisation had started working again. It was easy to be wise after the event but looking back it seemed that this had been a fundamental mistake in the policy of the Government in the past, a mistake into which they had

been led by precisely those arguments of optimism which the House would no doubt hear in the debate and a heavy responsibility would rest on those who would refuse to be wise even after the event and reject the teachings of experience. The Bengal Council accepted this view and the motion for rejecting the proposal to make the powers permanent was thrown out by 63 votes to 12 and amendments for a further temporary extension were lost without a division.

Sir Harry Haig, concluding, said: "We have never held, Sir, that these measures which are often described as repressive measures would alone bring the movement to an end, though we have held and still hold that they are essential foundation in the fight against terrorism. Something more is needed and I am glad to say that within the last few months there seem to be definite indications that is beginning to materialise. It is not the first time I have said in this House that what is wanted is the development of active and vigorous public opinion in Bengal which will destroy any deliberate or merely sentimental sympathy with those who are not only criminals but, I would hold, are evidently enemies to their own country and a disgrace.

"The Government of Bengal are very fully alive to these considerations; they are working actively to encourage that public opinion which perhaps was called forth unmistakably by the senseless outrage on his Excellency the Governor, Sir John Anderson, a man who it was felt had worked ceaselessly and wholeheartedly for the good of the people of the province, who had analysed and understood the root causes of their discontent and was devoting his remarkable energies to devising a remedy. (Applause). But while the House may rest assured that the Bengal Government are fully alive to all the advantages that can be derived from the awakening of public opinion I would ask them to remember that the Bengal Government also regard it as essential to continue without a time-limit the powers which they possess for dealing with this movement. In pursuit of that policy they require and ask for our assistance. I feel convinced that this House will not deny them the help they need." (Applause.)

Mr. S. C. Mitra moved that the bill be circulated for eliciting opinion by Aug. 31. He said that he was moving the circulation of the bill as members had not the original Act in their possession and hence were unable to deal satisfactorily with the bill. The bill, as he understood it, dealt with terrorist suspects. He was in agreement with the Government that the terrorist movement should be effectively tackled but objected to the passing of such a bill as a permanent measure. Such repressive laws have failed to stop terrorism. The time had, therefore, arrived to try other measures.

Sir Harry Haig informed Mr. Mitra that the Bengal Government were actively interested in other measures as well.

Continuing, Mr. Mitra said that the bill under discussion could be passed only as a temporary measure. It amounted to a confession on the part of the Government of India that the Bengal Government had failed, despite all their powers, to check the suspects in jails from communicating with their associates outside. The speaker had been informed by a high official that even detenus inside the Deoli jail were communicating with outside people. Finally, Mr. Mitra gave what he called two typical cases of treatment in jail. A young detenu was not allowed to see his dying mother who had no relative other than her son. When, however, the Government allowed him to go, his mother died. Another detenu, D. Bose, who was nephew of the speaker, was arrested after he had undergone nine months imprisonment for civil disobedience and then confined in a cellar for three and a half years. Due to no change in his environments and being cut off from his relatives and friends he grew insane and only then was he released. Complaints regarding cases of a similar nature had come often to the speaker and he was convinced that the methods which the Government were adopting did not meet the situation and worked against India and England. Finally, Mr. Mitra detailed the hardships of the prisoners, which, he said, could not be removed by jail visitors, who were either title-holders or contractors.

Mr. Sitarama Raju and Mr. Lal Chand Navalrai opposed the Home Member's motion from the legal point of view. Mr. Raju had no hesitation in joining the Government in putting down terrorism, but he described the Act as a lawless law, which was no remedy against lawlessness, for the Act deprived an accused person of his fundamental rights, and reminded the House of the views of Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Iyer, advocate-general of Madras, on the subject.

Mr. *Lalchand Navalrai* said that the Government had no right to deprive any subject of his fundamental right of *habeas corpus*. He asked the new Law Member to read the report of the debate held in 1932 on the original bill and wanted to know what view he took on it. The previous Law Member had held that the common law right of any person was not to be interfered with. Did the present Law Member agree with that view? Had he perused the report of that debate?

Mr. *Ghuznavi* said that terrorism did exist, and detention outside Bengal was absolutely necessary. If there were defects in the detention camps, those, of course, could be removed.

Mr. *Shafi Daudee* opined that terrorism had become a chronic disease and could only be checked by creating public opinion against it. Measures like the bill under discussion were stiffening public opinion against the Government. Things happening in Bengal through the agency of the police were a slur on any civilised Government. (Non-official cheers).

*Capt. Lalchand* said that at a time when terrorism was still at its height if they do not arm the executive with necessary powers, the country would have to be governed by martial law.

*Sardar Harbans Singh Brar* attributed the spread of terrorism to the treatment meted out to suspects as it attracted wide-spread sympathy of other people.

Mr. *Sadiq Hasan* said that history showed terrorist movements had always existed in India in the past but it was too much to send a mere suspect outside his province to suffer continuous imprisonment. It did not improve the offender.

The Assembly then adjourned.

24th. JULY:—Mr. *K. C. Neogy*, resuming the debate on the Bengal Bill, said that it was not so simple a measure as the Home Member had depicted it and wished the House to endorse principle of detaining people without trial, and added that executive judgment could replace judicial pronouncement as a feature of the law in India. The Bill was not a natural corollary of Bengal legislation either and no official speaker in the Bengal Council had stated that the banishment of detenus was contemplated. If detenus were sent to Deoli in 1932 it was because there was congestion in Bengal jails, but now that civil disobedience was over no such congestion existed. The only conclusion that could be come to was that the Government wished the suspects to be terrorised out of terrorism. The Government had not even followed the Rowlatt Committee's recommendation in connection with detention of the suspects, nor had they given effect to the Committee's suggestion that a non-official Indian having a knowledge of these should be a member of the body which decided the question of detaining suspects. Mr. *Neogy* felt that the great impediment in the way of fighting terrorism was that Government measures were operated repressively. He quoted from the opinion of Mr. J. N. Basu, who was a friend of the Law Member, upon the subject as well as from a speech in the Bengal Council of Khan Bahadur Abdul Momin, who was once Commissioner of the Chittagong Division and condemned the excesses committed by the local officials. Mr. *Shyama Prasad Mookherjee*, who had been considered fit for the appointment of Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, had also condemned such conduct and a retired Inspector of Education, who was respected by all, had warned the Government that even staunch loyalists were opposed to the policy. Mr. *Neogy* asked the Home Member, before he retired from his high office, to order an enquiry by High Court Judges drawn from various provinces in order to ascertain the truth or otherwise concerning official excesses. Reminding the Government of the respect which the British had enjoyed in the past, Mr. *Neogy* said that he opposed the Bill because it was un-British in character.

The discussion grew interesting when the *Law Member* rose to meet the arguments advanced by the Opposition. He gave the history of the Criminal Law Amendment Acts in Bengal and observed that since the Bengal Law Amendment Act of 1930 had now been made permanent, the Supplementary Act passed by the Assembly which was meant to be co-extensive with the Bengal Act should also be made permanent as a logical conclusion. Arguments had been advanced, he said, that these repressive laws should be suspended as they did not succeed in fighting terrorism. "Why not suspend the repressive laws for non-political murders and dacoities," he asked.

Mr. *S. C. Mitra* replied: These are preventive laws and should not be permanent.

*Sir N. N. Sircar*: Permanent measures are also subjected to repeal. I am sure some Members would come in future who would repeal all repressive laws.

He dealt at great length with the point raised by *Diwan Lalchand Navalrai* that the Bill barred the jurisdiction of the High Court and contravened the Habeas Corpus Act and violated the rights of subjects under unwritten law. He quoted extensively from various judgments given by the Calcutta High Court, and 2 decisions of the Judicial Committee and referred to the case of *Amir Khan* of 1870 where Mr. Justice Norman held that merely because a particular legislation affected the Habeas Corpus Act it could not be beyond the jurisdiction of the Indian Legislature provided there existed exigencies justifying such legislation.

At this stage *Diwan Lalchand Navalrai* raised a point of order whether any legislation affecting the Habeas Corpus Act or any common or unwritten law of Great Britain was within the competence of this legislature.

The *Chair* ruled that any measure violating any law forming the part of the constitution of Great Britain would be ultra vires provided the allegiance of Indian subjects depended on that law alone. But the allegiance of Indian subjects was not dependent on the Habeas Corpus Act.

Strongly opposing the Bill *Sir Abdur Rahim* said he understood that the Government of India were coming to the help of the Bengal Government who apparently failed to cope with the terrorist menace. But surely he could not support putting this measure permanently on the Statute Book.

*Mr. E. Studd* pleaded that terrorist suspects could not be placed for trial as publication of the evidence against them or sources thereof would lead to danger.

*Sir Hari Singh Gour* characterised the measure as 'Draconian' which did not discriminate between the guilty and the innocent. Unless the accused was given chance of defending himself public opinion against terrorism could not be mobilised. Legislation of this kind could at best be the messenger of discontent throughout the length and breadth of the country. He warned that nemesis was awaiting the reactionary measures all of which were sure of being blotted out by a stronger House (cheers). He suggested 'in-camera' trial of the terrorists so that the danger of publication of evidence could be safeguarded.

Supporting the Bill *Mr. N. N. Anklesaria* declared that Mahatma Gaudhi was the apostle of all subversive movements in the country. The root cause of terrorism in Bengal was undue favouritism shown to the Muslims.

After *Mr. Amar Dutt* spoke a motion for closure was applied.

*Sir Harry Haig* stressed that past experience showed that relaxation of repressive measures had strengthened terrorism.

*Mr. S. C. Mitra's* circulation motion was defeated. The House for the first time in this session divided when the consideration motion was put vote which was carried by 60 to 17 votes. The House then adjourned.

**25th. JULY :—**The Assembly rejected to-day by 57 votes against 23 the proposal of *Rai Bahadur B. L. Patil* to limit the life of the Bengal Detenus Bill for another three years only. The amendment of *Rao Bahadur Patil* was to the effect that the original Act, instead of permanently being placed on the Statute Book, as proposed by the Government, should have a life of six years, which meant only three years more. He said that the Government had given no reasons for making the Act permanent. Moreover, the Bengal Government had no right to force detenus on other local Governments and also cause inconvenience to the detenus themselves.

*Mr. Muhammad Muazzam*, opposing the amendment, said that for the preservation of law and order it was absolutely necessary that drastic legislation of this nature should be kept on the Statute Book for all times.

*Mr. Morgan* supported the Government's proposal. He was glad to observe that public opinion against terrorism was strengthening in Bengal. He said that, in saying that the detention of suspects in Deoli Jail had caused hardship to the detenus, some members were not stating facts. Bengal climate was very much worse than Ajmere climate.

*Mr. J. M. Chatterjee* (Bengal official) in a maiden speech gave his experiences of a detention camp in order to show that conditions were not so hard as was reported by some members. He opposed the amendment on the ground that the Act could be repealed by the legislature at a time when the terrorist movement had ceased.

*Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh* feared that if the Bill was passed as a permanent measure, thousands of relatives and friends of detenus would feel resentment against



Government action and it would spread discontent, which would not be conducive to enlisting public opinion against terrorism.

*Mr. B. V. Jadhav*, supporting the amendment, said that in the interests of the detenus and the country at large, it was necessary that such measures should be discussed in the Assembly periodically.

*Sir Harry Haig* declared that in the past the principle of temporary legislation to deal with terrorism had been tried, but because the legislation was not permanent the movement continued over a long period. As regards the fear of certain members of inflicting the suspects on other provinces, he said that Government policy was not to spread them all over India. They had been kept in Deoli Camp, where they were looked after in a reasonable way. Concluding, he said that the Bengal Government had decided that their present policy would last so long as the menace continued and the Government of India had decided to help the Bengal Government for the same period. The House then adjourned.

#### SEPARATION OF MALABAR

**26th. JULY :—**The Assembly discussed non-official resolutions to-day. The House resumed further consideration of the resolution for constitution of Malabar into a separate province.

*Mr. Sitarama Raju* supporting said that Malabar was satisfied with all considerations laid down by the Simon Commission for forming that territory into a separate province.

*Mr. Vidyasagar Pandya* quoted resolutions passed by the Malabar Chamber of Commerce to show that the financial burden involved by the separation would be so heavy as could not be borne by tax-payers.

*Mr. B. Das* did not oppose the resolution on principle, but said that Orissa had to agitate for thirty years before reaching the present stage, which process Malabar must undergo.

*Mr. Lalechand Navalarai* emphasised that separation of small provinces from large ones was a great mistake.

*Sir Mahomed Yaqub* said that there was no geographical, linguistic or cultural affinity between Malabar and the rest of the Madras Presidency and it should not have been merged in Madras.

*Bhai Permanand* favoured the appointment of a Royal Commission to settle the question once for all, whether the provinces should be distributed on linguistic basis, or for any other reasons.

*Sir Harry Haig* made the last speech as Home Member. He said that under section 52 (A) of the Government of India Act, a separate province could be created under the existing constitution only if there were strong expression of opinion in favour of it by the local Government and legislature. The Home Member promised to forward the debate to the Secretary of State, inviting attention to the point as to whether provision would or would not be made in the new constitution for the constitution of a new province, should that be found desirable.

*Mr. Ranga Iyer* withdrew the resolution.

#### BAD FOOD ON RAILWAYS

*Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed* moved the next resolution urging appointment of a committee to enquire now for the system of giving contracts and sub-contracts to outsiders and not local persons for catering to railway passengers was responsible for supply of bad food at high prices on the railways and to suggest means of removing the grievances.

*Sir Henry Gidney* said that as a medical man, he was often staggered to see deplorable food vended on the railways. He advised that medical officers should inspect food and water in railway precincts.

*Sir Joseph Bhore* borrowing *Dr. Gour's* remarks on a festive occasion said : "the less said about it, the better" (laughter). He promised to forward the debate to railways asking them specifically to ask the local advisory committee's opinions. When these would be received by the Railway Board they would be given due consideration and placed before the Central Advisory Council.

*Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed* on this assurance withdrew the resolution.

#### INDIAN CHRISTIANS IN SERVICES

*Dr. D'Souza*, nominated member, representing the Indian Christians, then moved the resolution that the claims of the Indian Christian community for adequate

representation in the services and for representation on any committee to be constituted by the decision of which the political future of the community might be affected, should be recognized.

*Bhai Parmanand* strongly opposed the resolution on principle, as it created a spirit of rivalry and jealousy amongst various communities. The Assembly at this stage adjourned till the 30th.

#### INDIAN DOCK LABOURERS' BILL

**30th. JULY :—**The passage of the Indian Dock Labourers' Bill, giving effect to the convention concerning protection against accident was easy, there being very few speeches and *Sir Jopesh Bhore* was cheered at the third reading. *Mr. Matin Choudhry* welcomed the bill as a step in the right direction. *Dewan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar* wanted the maritime Indian States to fall in a line with British India.

*Raja Bahadur Krishnamachari* agreed but wanted the Government of India to obtain the unfettered opinion of the States without much of the powers of persuasion as were often employed. *Mr Lalchand Navalrai* justified the amendments in the select committee. *Mr. B. Das* suggested that Indian princes should not be allowed to represent India at the League of Nations if they did not give effect to the conventions.

On the motion of *Sir Nripendra Sircar*, the House passed the Bill amending certain enactments and repealing certain other enactments.

*Mr. Maswood Ahmed* moved an amendment which gave the Governor-General power to certify a passenger as a fit person for sailing who had been inoculated against cholera within a period to be prescribed by him and not six months as laid down in the Merchant Shipping Act.

The Government opposed the amendment which was rejected.

#### SEA CUSTOMS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

*Mr. A. J. Raisman* moved that the Bill amending the Sea Customs Act be taken into consideration. He said that under sec. 42, Sea Customs Act of 1878, a drawback of seven-eighths of the customs duty paid on goods on importation was repayable at the time of re-export of the goods subject to certain conditions. The Government of India had long felt that the grant of the drawback on used goods was wrong in principle and they now decided that payment of such drawback be discontinued except in special cases to be prescribed by rules. The Government, he assured the House, proposed to consult the interests concerned before enforcing these rules. He informed the house that only one objection had been received, namely, from the Automobile Association against the non-refund of the duty on cars belonging to tourists. But, said the speaker, the Government had under consideration the introduction of a system which now obtained in the European countries, namely, that cars be allowed to come duty-free into India on a guarantee from the Automobile Association that the owner intended to take it back after his tour or visit. In case the owner failed to take the car back the Automobile Association would have to pay the duty to the Government.

*Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh* wanted to know whether the rule-making powers were not too wide and hoped that before making rules Government would consult the general public.

The motion for consideration was passed. The house next discussed the Bill clause by clause. *Sir Leslie Hudson* moved an amendment to the second clause which as amended read that the Governor-General 'may subject to the condition of previous publication from time to time by notification in the Gazettee of India make rules in respect of goods which have been taken into use between importation and exportation'. The Government accepted the amendment which was passed without any further discussion. The house passed the Bill.

#### OTHER BILLS

On the motion of *Mr. Sanjiva Row* the House also passed the *Bill amending the Negotiable Instruments Act* as passed by the Council of State and reported by the select committee and the *Bill amending the Indian Trust Act* as passed by the Council of State. The Assembly then adjourned.

#### STEEL PROTECTION BILL

**31st. JULY :—***Sir Joseph Bhore* was cheered as he rose and moved the consideration of the Steel Protection Bill. *Sir Joseph Bhore* moved for reference of the Bill



to a select committee constituting of Sir Abdur Rahim, Dewan Bahadur A. Ramawami Mudaliar, Messrs H. P. Mody, B. Das, S. C. Sen, R. P. Bagla, R. S. Sarma, Sir Hari Singh Gour, Mr. S. K. Mahapatra, Sir Leslie Hudson, S. Amin Khan, Muazzam Sahib, Sir James Grigg, Sir Frank Noyce and Sir Joseph Bhore with instructions to report on or before Monday, Aug. 13.

Sir Joseph Bhore said the consideration of the case of the steel and iron industry was a simpler task than of cotton textile. This industry was concentrated in a few centres and its products did not vary very greatly in character and quality and comparisons of prices were generally more easy and reliable. They had to answer four questions, namely, (1) has the industry utilized the period of protection to improve its efficiency? If the answer is in the affirmative (2) has that improvement been purchased at an unduly or disproportionately high cost to the consumer? (3) if the price paid has not been excessive should protection be continued and (4) if protection is continued what should be the extent of that protection? Answering the first question affirmatively Sir Joseph Bhore said that this was achieved despite the reduced demand during the present wave of depression and said the Tariff Board's finding was that no general charge of inefficiency could be brought against the Tatas. According to the Board no complaint reached as regards the quality of steel used by railways and engineering works which had indeed found the company's products satisfactory and fully up to the standard required. The result of the finding was that a high standard of efficiency had been pursued and achieved. Judged by prices the results were encouraging for Sir Joseph Bhore quoted statistics to show that the prices had gone down. In the case of rails it had gone down from Rs. 82 per ton in 1927 to Rs. 58 per ton in May, 1934: plates from Rs. 103 to Rs. 66, bars from Rs. 87 to Rs. 56 and galvanised sheets from Rs. 254 to Rs. 119. Thus a material improvement had taken place in the efficiency of the industry under the policy of discriminating protection. Sir Joseph Bhore said that he did not know of any other major industry which could compare with iron and steel industry in abundance and the quality of raw material necessary for its products. Let it not be forgotten this industry was a key industry of national importance and it played a great part during the war. In assessing the profits and losses of the company they should consider the advantages gained by way of stimulation of several subsidiary industries the benefit of whose money value could not be accurately placed. If they were very satisfied that the industry had used protection to improve itself in efficiency and organisation and further that within a measurable distance of time it could stand the outside challenge of competitive rivals then they would be justified in extending protection in public interest. Having made sacrifices in the past the country could not allow its objective to slip away when it was almost within sight. Sir Joseph, continuing, contended that the reduction in expenses which the board in 1926 had anticipated would be achieved in the year 1933-34 had been exceeded, which meant that the industry had done better than it was thought it could or would do. The industry had made such progress in efficiency that over five important articles, namely, rails, fishplates, tested structurals and tested plates the board had declared that the Indian products required no protection at all, while in the case of seven other articles a very large reduction in the prevailing rates had been recommended. This result was welcome from the point of view of the consumer. Except in the case of tested structurals lower duty had been recommended in other cases. There was a prospect now that in the next seven years the industry would be able to stand on its legs and need no further protection.

Referring to the preferential duties proposed for the United Kingdom, Sir Joseph Bhore announced that as the result of correspondence, his Majesty's Government had agreed to allow free import of Indian pig iron as against a duty of 33 one third imposed against foreign countries. (Applause.)

Sir Joseph Bhore further announced that his Majesty's Government had also agreed to give sympathetic consideration to the Indian case regarding manganese.

Sir Joseph Bhore further remarked that the case regarding tested plates and the levy of excise duties would be dealt with by the Finance Member. Sir Joseph Bhore specially dealt with the board's recommendations regarding supply of billets for re-rolling industry and supply of tin bars for the tin plate industry. He hoped Tatas would supply billets for re-rolling at Rs. 64 plus the excise duty, but if Tatas were unable to do so Government would reduce the revenue duty to the extent that may be necessary to enable re-rolling mills to obtain billets at Rs. 64 plus the excise duty. Similarly as regards the tinplate industry, Tatas had been asked

to revise their agreement with the tinplate company to reduce the present excessive profit and sell these for Rs. 64 plus the excise duty, but if by the end of March, 1935 Tatas fail to modify the arrangement, Government would have to consider necessary steps to bring about the result. He did not wish this to be treated as a threat and would rather appeal to the noble ideals of the founders of Tatas (applause) to ask Tatas to help subsidiary industries.

Dealing with the excise duty, Sir Joseph Bhore said that the Tariff Board estimated the loss of customs revenue to be Rs. 60 lakhs but as part thereof would be made through galvanised sheets, Government had to realize the balance through the imposition of an excise duty. As Tatas alone produce steel ingots the duty would be easily collected and would be spread over the whole range of steel products and would not unduly weigh against the particular production. He assured the House that the excise duty was not meant to form a permanent feature of the fiscal system, but its removal or reduction would depend on the general financial position. Concluding Sir Joseph Bhore said that the board's recommendation balanced fairly the interests of the industry and the consumers and asked the House to accept the proposals based on the report.

The first speaker on the non-official side was Mr. *Abdul Matin Choudhury*, who gave his support to the protective scheme. If India was to be economically independent, then this protection was necessary. If Tatas had not been able to dispense with the protection given during these years, it is because of the unprecedented depression, as a result of which Tata received during the last four years only Rs. 2 lakhs worth of orders from the railways as against over Rs. 7 lakhs anticipated originally by the Tariff Board. From the tax-payer's point of view, the industry benefitted the Indian exchequer, for during the War it gave Rs. 6 crores to the Government over the price of 300,000 tons of steel supplied. Mr. Choudhry exhaustively examined the record of the welfare work by Tatas and said that it was one of which any institution could be proud, and on that account alone Tatas deserved further protection. But he asked how even Sir Joseph Bhore could swallow the bitter pill of imperial preference introduced by the Tariff Board.

Mr. *B. Das* characterized the bill as giving protection to the British and not the Indian steel industry. The Government had gone behind the policy laid down in 1923. It was better for the Government to give no protection and let the industry function under normal revenue duties than to bring forward such a measure. Mr. Das contended that the present Assembly did not represent public opinion and challenged the Government to bring this measure up next February and see the verdict of the country. He protested that the proposal that tested and untested steel should sell at the same price would cause a serious handicap to Tatas.

Mr. *Sitarama Raju*, while congratulating Sir Joseph Bhore on getting preferences in the United Kingdom market for Indian pig iron and a favourable consideration of the case of manganese, alluded to the figures of imports of these in the British market. Regarding pig iron he contended that India had been exporting more to foreign markets than to the United Kingdom. In fact, Japan had been India's best customer. Mr. Raju also wanted to know how much Indian goods were re-exported to other countries from there. He did not want to stand in the way of Tatas getting protection, but it should not be at the ruin of other industries or impose too much of burden on the taxpayer. Mr. Raju had not concluded when the House adjourned.

**1st. AUGUST :—**Mr. *Sitaram Raju* resuming the Steel Bill discussion to-day opposed the Bill on behalf of the consumers.

Sir *Leslie Hudson* deplored that when the Government were not able to restore the five per cent cut and brought forward emergency budgets they should abolish revenue duties in respect of certain steel products for which he found no justification. Nor could he approve of the imposition of excise duty whose only corollary was that whenever any industry enjoying protection became self-sufficient it should be subjected to excise duty.

Agreeing with Sir Leslie Hudson, Mr. *Mody* lodged emphatic protest against the abolition of revenue duties on certain British steel products and imposition of the Tariff Board had no business to meddle with revenue considerations.

Mr. *Mody* quoted figures and maintained that the scale of protection proposed in the Bill in respect of certain articles fell far short of an effective protection. He

suggested that some differentiation should be made between the tested and untested bars. He stressed the all-round national importance of the steel industry and pleaded for its protection.

Sir *James Grigg*, meeting arguments advanced against the levy of Excise duty on certain steel products, stated that the loss estimated due to the lowering of import duties was about Rs. 30 lakhs which could not be met by the imposition of higher revenue duties on structurals or on galvanised sheets—revenue duties in respect of articles on which no protective duty is wanted if the law of diminishing return would operate. The only course left to meet the loss was to have excise duty which, however, is not likely to be a permanent feature. As regards differentiation in duties on the United Kingdom and continental products concerned, he asserted that continental products were quoted at dumping prices and so the United Kingdom had to be given some preference. But that will not harm the Indian industry. He announced that 10 per cent. import duty on machinery would be removed as soon as the finances improved.

Messrs. *Navalrai*, *Gayaprasad Singh* and *Azhar Ali* spoke on the Bill. Mr. *S. C. Mitra* enquired why the Tatas should not produce steel at the cheapest rate when India produced pig iron cheapest. After Mr. *Thampan* had made some observations the House adjourned.

#### BENGAL REGULATION (1818) REPEAL BILL

**2nd. AUGUST :—**In the Assembly to-day, Mr. *Amarnath Dutt* moved his Bill proposing the repeal of the Bengal Regulation of 1818. Mr. Dutt gave a historical retrospect to show that the Regulation was enacted in unusual time for maintaining alliances between the Government and the Foreign Governments, but now it was worked for quite different purposes and against persons who by their very nature could not have harboured violent intentions—persons like Aswni Kumar Dutta.

*Captain Lalchand* said that in the performance of their duty of safeguarding the persons and property of its citizens the Government had to resort to strong measures. Otherwise, nothing but chaos would prevail.

Mr. *D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury* opined that terrorism could only be stamped out by the co-operation of the people, and not by repressive laws which, on the other hand, promoted terrorism.

Mr. *A. Chatterjee* (official, Bengal) said that behind all the manifestations of the terrorist movement there was some power which was a source of mischief. In order to tackle this hidden power the Government must have certain powers, and the power conferred by the Regulation was probably the only power (A voice : Only ! ) which the State had for exercising in such emergencies.

Mr. *H. A. F. Metcalfe*, Foreign Secretary, said that 75 per cent. of the object of the Regulation had nothing to do with internal commotion, but concerned foreign and political relations. Among the numerous States on the border of India where personal rule prevailed dynasties rose and fell and refugees entered India. It was essential for the Government to possess power to regulate the movements of these refugees lest they escaped and caused mischief in their country. From the point of view of foreign relations alone it would be impracticable to deprive the Government of the powers they possessed at present.

Mr. *Lalchand Navalrai* doubted whether the present civilisation required an obsolete measure, which was purely un-British and unlawful.

Sir *Henry Craik* opposed the Bill and appealed for its rejection, even as the House only six months ago had decided. Let the House decide whether such a valuable weapon, which the Government had, should be taken away from them at the present stage of constitutional progress, when there were two menaces, namely, terrorism and communism. Terrorism was the public enemy number one, and communism was the public enemy number two. Sir Henry Craik explained how such enemies were traced and, on what amount of officially sifted evidence, in order to save human lives who were intended victims of terrorists or anarchists. He emphatically denied that the regulation was being abused. Lord Morley had been quoted, but Lord Morley was a statesman of the doctrinaire school of liberal thought. Even Lord Morley never yielded to pressure to repeal this regulation. On the other hand, Lord Morley had stated clearly the circumstances which justified the retention of the regulation and those very formidable and obscure circumstances existed still and therefore, the Government of India, while deploring its necessity, could not part with powers which it gave to the executive.

Sir Henry Craik here gave a clear exposition of how in the Punjab under the Criminal Law Amendment Act which gave almost similar powers to the Government they had to intern certain individuals and how without such prompt action the lives of the intended victims would have been risked. They even know when, how and where the anarchists planned attempt of their crime. Statements made by the C. I. D. officers were found in 95 per cent of cases to be well founded. The Government would strongly oppose any attempt to deprive them of a very valuable instrument to save very valuable lives, both Indian and British. Let the House recall the fact that only a few days ago at Chicago the American Government had to shoot the public enemy number one. In India, the anarchist came with his abominable cult and diabolical ingenuity, and his attempt was deliberately to paralyse and render ineffectual the whole machinery of the Government. Communism, though not so dangerous as anarchism, was a growing danger in certain parts of India, as Communists derived inspiration and financial help from the Communist International with the objective of an armed revolution to subvert not only the existing form of Government but the whole fabric of the society.

He said: "One member attacked me in respect of the reply I gave yesterday about Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose that the Government of India consulted the local Government, and he implied that by this consultation the Government of India exceeded the rights, statutory or legal, and had shuffled off the responsibilities. In regard to that I am wholly unrepentant. I don't, for a moment, say that the Government of India by consulting the local Government, have evaded their responsibility. In fact, I go further and say that the Government of India would have been very much to blame if it had come to a decision in a case of that sort without consulting the local agency, the Government of Bengal".

Sir Hari Singh Gour pointed to the unanimous report of the Repressive Laws Committees, to which the Government members also affixed their signatures. Why did not the Government now support that pledge? Government were effectively dealing with Terrorists and Communists with the Criminal Law Amendment Act. Then, why retain the regulation which denied numerous innocent persons the right to prove their innocence? The House at this stage adjourned.

#### THE STEEL PROTECTION BILL (CONTD)

**3rd. AUGUST:**—The Assembly held an additional sitting to-day in order to conclude the debate on the Steel Protection Excise Duty Bill and refer it to a Select Committee. Mr. *Ramaswami Mudaliar* dealt first with the speech of the Finance Member which, though bereft of rhetoric, had a great amount of subtlety about it. The first question to debate was whether the removal of the revenue duty on tested structurals was justified. He said that for fifteen years they had been hearing Finance Members regarding the difference between protective duties and revenue duties and had been none the wiser for it.

The Finance Member had fallen into the same confusion of which he accused Mr. Mody. The fact of the matter was that the Finance Member had not read all the literature on the subject and the debate which took place in the Assembly in 1923. The revenue duty on tested structurals would yield two lakhs and the Finance Member would, as years rolled by, know that he could not afford to give up even a thousand rupees. The Tariff Board went entirely outside its terms of reference which required protection of the Indian industry, and not of the industry abroad. He hoped that this act of the Tariff Board would not be considered a precedent for the future and that revenue duties would continue to exist for financial reasons. In this case, of course, the revenue duty was also helpful to some engineering works in India and the noble gesture of the Congress. Proceeding, Mr. Mudaliar described the Tariff Board's recommendation as well as the Government's acceptance thereof to reduce the duty on galvanised sheets as "most extraordinarily surprising and improper". The Board had looked at this question with a complete lack of judicial impartiality. He recalled the history of the protective duty on galvanised sheets and the Ottawa Conference observations as to the preference on this article and said that internal consumption in this respect had grown and India could not, therefore, export bar to England for conversion into galvanised sheets. The Finance Member hinted at a political calamity if this is not given to the British manufacturer. I can even appreciate that argument, but then, don't come and call this a protective measure. And you come forward and justify this as necessary in the interests of the agriculturists because you say that galvanised sheets are required by the agriculturists. What do you know of the conditions of the



agriculturists ? Continuing, Dewan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar asked the House to read the piteous representations made by European firms working in India for protection. Every European firm working in India was as much entitled to protection as an Indian firm, but here was a case of so-called rationalized industry of England, which undercut firms in India. They had taken away the orders for the Narbadda bridge, and engineering firms in India were praying for orders for the Howrah Bridge, a like of which work occurred only once in a lifetime. Had the Finance Member forgotten the "Buy British" slogan placarded all over England ?

*Sir James Grigg* : That includes Empire goods.

*Dewan Bahadur Mudaliar* :—Yes, but what about the slogan of "home consumption in home markets" ? What we too want in India is home market for home consumption (cheers). Dewan Bahadur said that if the Tariff Board's proposals were accepted, the engineering firms in Calcutta would lose all custom to the Calcutta Branch of a British Company.

*Sir Abdur Rahim* said that before he sat on the Select Committee he would like to know whether it would be open in the Committee to move omission of the excise duty.

*Sir James Grigg* said that a point of principle was for the chair to decide, but the Government regarded the excise duty a vital part of the Bill, and its loss would be equivalent to the loss of the Bill.

The *President* ruled that the principle to which the House would be committed by referring the Bill to a Select Committee was that the iron steel industry required protection (opposition cheers). It might be, that in the opinion of the Government the excise duty was essential to make good the loss, but the principle of the Bill was one of the protection to the steel industry.

*Sir Abdur Rahim* resuming said that that being the position he would support the Bill, as on ground of national defence alone Jamshedpur works deserved protection. Concluding, Sir Abdur Rahim expressed the opinion that British industrialists with their keen business acumen would be able to take the maximum advantage of the preference granted to them.

*Sir Joseph Bhore* replying to the debate said that it was not necessary for him to reply in detail, as it was the general desire of the House that the Bill should go to Select Committee. Sir Joseph added that Government did not intend it to be a permanent imposition and assured the Assembly that it would be removed as soon as financial considerations permitted. The objection to the excise duty was based on misapprehension. Sir Joseph Bhore next referred to Dewan Bahadur Mudaliar's remarks, and said that over galvanised sheets, Government proposal benefitted the agriculturist consumers to the extent of forty-eight lakhs. Dewan Bahadur Mudaliar had wanted galvanised sheets to come at the same price into India, whether from Britain or continent. He was wrong in supposing that one hundred and sixty rupees per ton for British sheets left a large margin of profit. The Ottawa Committee's report did not support that view. The motion for a Select Committee was passed without division. The House then adjourned till the 6th.

#### BENGAL CRIMINAL LAW AMEND. BILL ( CONTD. )

**6th. AUGUST** :—On the House resuming discussion on the Bengal Detenus Bill, *Mr. Patil's* attempt to insert a new clause, namely that section 4 of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Supplementary Act of 1932 shall be omitted, proved abortive. During the third reading of the Bill, *Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed* attributed all terrorist evils in Bengal to the defective system of the University of Calcutta, which had led to the dwindling of the predominant position the Bengalees once held both in Government and outside.

Strongly objecting to the measure of externment of Bengal detenus being made permanent, *Mr. Satish Sen* quoted extracts from Government reports showing that there was no justification for it. He maintained that relaxation of repressive laws was not responsible for the increased recrudescence of terrorist activities.

*Mr. S. C. Mitra* asserted that the Bill should be thrown out. Why, in the vast province of Bengal, he asked, the Government should not find some segregated place to confine the detenus ? *Mr. Mitra* pointed out the various difficulties regarding interviews and correspondence if the detenus were to be sent outside Bengal. He deplored the Government's refusal of interviews with detenus and read letters, stating that the relatives of the detenus at Deoli had for months together no information about their wards. "We are now speaking of tested and untested steel". *Mr. Mitra* said, "but where is the tested, untested or even fabricated evidence against the

detenus justifying their externment?" Continuing, Mr. Mitra referred to the communal riots of Dacca, in which a responsible official brought false charges against Hindus and yet the action of the official concerned was shielded. By the present Bill even the little sense of British justice, which Indians had, would be gone and the future generation would hold those Government officials, who were responsible for such Bill and, therefore, for fostering terrorism in Bengal as being public enemies of the State.

Mr. *Bhagatram Puri*, recording protest against the Bill, asked why the Government did not wait to bring this Bill before the Assembly next January. Where was the hurry for it? Mr. Puri contended that terrorism or anarchism was but a passing phase and not a permanent feature of Bengal life, and so, such a legislation should not be given a permanent lease of life on the statute book. It was opposed to all rules of justice.

Mr. *B. Das* attributed the terrorist phase to acute unemployment in Bengal as well as to terrorising methods of the Government, which incarcerated Mr. Gandhi on his return from the Round Table Conference. In fact, terrorism would not have revived itself but for the Government imprisoning him. Yet there was Mr. Anklesaria in the Assembly, who had the audacity to describe Mr. Gandhi as an apostle of all subversive movements in India. No Parsee would subscribe to this view of Mr. Anklesaria, who evidently was trying to hobnob with the Sanatanists of Gujrat for his election to the Assembly.

*Diwan Ramasmami Mudaliar*, on behalf of the Independents, informed that his Party would vote against the Bill as the Government was not prepared to limit the life of the Bill to three years.

*The Home Member*, replying to the debate, said that the decision of the Government to make powers permanent did not mean that the Act would necessarily remain on the statute book for ever. It merely meant that so long as the terrorist danger was an imminent one, this very valuable weapon would be available to be used. When the movement would finally be brought under control, there was no reason why this Act should not be repealed. It was only permanent in the sense that the Government wanted it to be continually available so long as the danger, for which the Act was required, was present. Sir *Henry Craik* assured Dr. Ziauddin that the Bengal Government were giving anxious consideration to the question as to how far the system of education was helping the recruitment of terrorists. Sir Henry said that by this law the Government did not hope finally to crush the movement. Causes were deeper than that and social and economic factors would require a careful examination, but it should not be beyond the wit of man to devise some escape from these difficulties.

The purpose of establishing the Deoli Camp was really to put detenus in an inaccessible place where the Government had made elaborate rules regulating the condition of life of detenus. Mr. S. C. Mitra, the champion of detenus, had made a statement from interested parties, but Sir Henry Craik assured that he would see that no abuses took place and would pay a personal visit to the Deoli Camp as soon as possible. He further assured that there was no hunger-strike at Deoli.

The House divided and passed the Bill by 54 against 34 votes. The Assembly then adjourned.

#### ASSAM CRIMINAL LAW AMEND. BILL (CONTD.)

**7th. AUGUST :—**Questions over, Sir *Henry Craik* moved that the Assam Criminal Law Amendment Supplementary Bill be taken into consideration.

In moving for consideration of the Bill, the *Home Member* said that the necessity for the present Bill arose out of the fact that the Assam Council had recently passed a measure barring the jurisdiction of the High Court in respect of persons arrested and detained under that measure which was *ultra vires* of that Council.

Mr. *Phookan* pointed out that the original Act, which was sought to be supplemented, was not available in the library and therefore until the members knew what the original Act was, they could not form any opinion on the new bill.

On the *Leader of the House* agreeing to print and circulate the Assam Act, his suggestion to postpone consideration of the bill till Monday next was accepted.

#### CARRIAGE BY AIR

On the motions of Sir *Frank Noyce*, the Bill to give effect in British India to convention for unification of certain rules relating to international carriage by air and the Bill to make better provision for control of the manufacture, possession,



use, operation, sale, import and export of air-crafts as reported by the Select Committee were taken into consideration and passed without any amendment.

#### MECHANICAL LIGHTERS BILL

The House also passed on the motion of the *Finance Member* the Mechanical Lighters Bill as reported by the Select Committee which suggested the imposition of excise duty of Rs. 1-8 on every lighter instead Rs. 2 as originally proposed.

*Mr. Bhupat Singh* tried without success to cut down the amount of duty to Re. 1, nor was *Dr. Ziauddin* successful when he wanted to insert a new clause making the section relating to raising the customs duty by corresponding excise duty over and above the revenue duty of 50 per cent ad valorem, immediately operative, leaving the other sections to the Governor-General-in-Council,

#### INDIAN NAVY (DISCIPLINE) BILL

*Col. Lumby* then moved the reference to a select committee of the Indian Navy (Discipline) Bill. He said that the bill was circulated last February and the opinions received were favourable to the bill and no point which had not been discussed in the Assembly had been raised by those who expressed opinions on the bill. Dealing first with the suspicion voiced in the previous debates, *Col. Lumby* said that the naval policy of the Government of India was not to build big ships but to have a small squadron for local naval defence of India's coasts, harbours and Indian shipping, such as the destruction of enemy submarines, conveying of ships from port to port, destroying mines laid by enemies, etc. As for the other objection, he said that by passing the bill the navy would not cost India any more than it did at present. Indianization was progressing. Out of 117 officers three were already Indians and in two years they would be 14. The ratio of two British to one Indian officer was not sacred and could be changed, but at present there was no keenness among Indian boys for entry into this service. He hoped that this would improve after the bill is passed and the navy gets additional status and prestige by being called the Royal Indian Navy. As for the constitutional objection, he held that so long as defence was a reserved subject they could not make their decisions subject to the vote of the legislature, but the Government of India were definitely pledged to consult the legislature before lending its navy to the British Government for defensive purposes other than those of India. *Col. Lumby* appealed to the House to give encouragement to a service which had been very much disappointed for the past six years for not being able to get a better status and prestige and was sure that members who helped in passing the bill would never regret having done so. (Applause).

*Mr. Sitarama Raju* said that in considering the bill two questions required answers from the Government, who created the Indian navy, and when with these questions *Sir Shamukham Chetty* opened the attack on the bill in the last occasion when it was thrown out by the Assembly (non-official applause) he reinforced the argument of the Zamindar Association of Calcutta (*Mr. B. Das*: Say Loyalist Bengali Association) that the bill should not be passed at a time when the new constitution was on the anvil. The speaker expressed the discontent of the general public against the pace of Indianization and disappointment that India's quota for the navy was within the quota of Great Britain under the armament limitation so that India could not build a navy without first getting the consent of Britain for a reduction in their navy. *Mr. Raju* had not concluded when the House adjourned.

**8th. AUGUST :—**Resuming the discussion on the Navy Bill to-day, *Sir Henry Gidney* demanded greater Indianisation and asked the House to modify the Bill in such a way as to make the present Indian marine the nucleus of the Indian Navy. The Royal Indian Marine is known in Bombay as a white elephant maintained at an enormous cost but without any good results.

Asking the House, specially the elected members, to reject the select committee motion *Sir Hari Singh Gour* in a very convincing speech pointed out the dangers to which the Assembly was going to expose itself by giving its sanction to the Bill which in effect would keep the Indian Navy under the entire control of the British Navy and Parliament but for which India would have to pay without any controlling power to be exercisable by India's legislature. The situation, he maintained, was preposterous. The only object of the bill was to introduce the same standard of discipline in Indian Navy so that in time of war, Britain might easily bring into

requisition Indian Naval forces for which India would pay but over which she would have no control.

Mr. *B. Das*, speaking on the Bill, objected to sanction of Indian navy being created before the Army expenditures of other countries and showed how India in comparison with her revenues spent lavishly on the Army. This was due to India's being a subordinate country.

In a fiery speech *Diwan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar* asked the House to reject the Bill altogether before they knew what would be the constitutional position of India with regard to the defence problems, whether India would have a free hand and control over her navy and whether the Indian Navy would be used outside Indian water without the consent of Indian legislatures. Continuing, *Dewan Bahadur Ramsawamy Mudaliar* said it was improper to say that no objection should be taken to the Bill because India had committed herself in the Round Table Conference to defence being a reserved subject and leaving the control over defence to the Viceroy. He referred to what happened at the Round Table Conference and asked Sir Nripen Sircar to bear him out.

After *Col. Lumby* replied the Select Committee motion was carried by 58 against 34 votes. The House then adjourned.

#### INDIAN CHRISTIANS IN SERVICES

9th. AUGUST :—In the Assembly to-day the Indian Christian community came in for much sympathy and fraternal consideration in course of the speeches made by *Dewan Bahadur Mudaliar*, *Sir Harisingh Gour*, *Mr. Aggarwal*, *Dr. Ziauddin* and others who agreed that the claims of the Indian Christian community for adequate representation in the Public Services and committees to be set up for settling the constitutional future of India, should be recognised.

*Dewan Bahadur Mudaliar* said that Indian Christians like certain other minority communities had no extra-territorial inclinations and did not look either to Mecca or Japan for inspiration. They are children of the soil and they are Indians first and last.

*Mr. Trivedi* replying on behalf of the Government showed by quoting statistics that Indian Christians were represented in the services controlled by the Government of India much in excess of the proportion of their population. Assuring that their claims for representation in the constitutional committees would be considered, he asked *Mr. De Souza* to withdraw his resolution.

After strongly criticising the Government for their scanty attention given to the Indian Christians, *Mr. De Souza* wanted permission of the House to withdraw his resolution which the House stoutly refused, the Government Benches remaining neutral. The resolution was ultimately accepted amidst prolonged cheers.

#### IMPROVEMENT OF COAL TRADE

*Mr. Ghuznavi* then moved his resolution asking the House to appoint a committee to enquire as to how far the present abnormal depression in Indian coal trade and industry was due to the work of the State-owned railway collieries and present surcharge of railway freight on coal and other causes and to suggest ways and means for its improvement.

The importance of coal as a key and basic industry and as being vital to the economic structure of India was emphasised by *Mr. Ghuznavi* in support of his resolution. He declared that coal was a national asset and of all the countries in the Empire, India ranked only second to Great Britain in the volume and production of coal. *Mr. Ghuznavi* said that some form of control of the potential productive capacity of mines can alone raise the prices to a higher economic level. Some other factors upon the removal of which depends to a great extent the improvement in the trade position include (i) acquisition and development of uneconomic State-owned and Company-owned railway collieries, the railways being the single largest consumer of coal in India; (ii) high railway freight of 15 p. c. surcharge on long distance coal traffic; (iii) differential treatment to C. P. coal in the matter of railway freight; (iv) increased and increasing substitution of oil fuel in the place of coal and (v) numerous taxes and cesses which no other industry except coal is required to pay. Referring to the present resolution which should not be made an excuse for delaying the restriction scheme, *Mr. Ghuznavi* said that he had the support of collieries representing four-fifths of the total output and had the backing of three premier organisations like the Indian Mining Association, the Indian Mining Federation and the Indian Colliery-owners' Association.

*Mr. P. R. Rau*, Financial Commissioner, replying said that *Mr. Ghuznavi* had changed his views in as much as two years ago the latter advocated the lowering of prices in coal whereas to-day he wanted to raise the price in coal.

On assurances being given that the Government would enquire into the condition of the coal trade, *Mr. Ghuznavi* withdrew his resolution. The House then adjourned till the 13th.

ASSAM CRIMINAL LAW AMEND. BILL (CONTD.)

**13th. AUGUST :—**Questions over, the Assembly resumed discussion of the Assam Bill. *Mr. Phookan* objected to the measure on two grounds, namely, that it was bad in law to detain persons indefinitely without trial on evidence tendered which was not tested and that the law was unnecessary specially in his province where even boyish pranks of frightening others with toy pistols or use of crackers even on festive occasions were absent. Continuing, *Mr. Phookan* said that the procedure adopted in detaining persons on mere suspicion without trial is looked upon with grave suspicion by the public. He warned the Government that by the introduction of the measure, the Government cannot achieve their object.

Amidst loud cheers, *Mr. K. C. Neogy* rose to oppose the Bill. He emphasised that so far as Bengal is concerned, the right of appeal is not now looked upon as a valued one as in almost all cases, persons convicted by Special Tribunals who succeed in getting themselves acquitted on appeal are immediately arrested under the preventive sections of the Criminal Law Amendment Act. He deplored Government's undermining respect of the people in the British judicial system which has been so long working as a bulwark against all anti-Government agitation and observed that High Courts should be saved from such humiliation. He even asked if the High Courts had that amount of independence which they generally enjoy in dealing with political cases. In Bengal, he said, public confidence had been shaken in the independence of the judges. With reference to the Punjab he quoted at length from the speech made by Justice Shadilal on his retirement in reply to addresses presented to him where he mentioned difficulties and disadvantages which the judges suffer from in following the doctrine of British judicial system under peculiar circumstances in India which tend to impair the independence of the judiciary.

*Mr. Abdul Matin Choudhury* opposing the Bill said the circumstances in Assam are quite different from Bengal and no such legislation can be justified.

*Sardar Sant Singh* thought that the repeal of repressive laws was the only remedy of terrorist menace. Time had come, he observed, when Government had better to decide once for all whether they wanted the rule of law or rule of repression. *Mr. J. R. Scott* and *Mr. Anklesaria* supported the bill. *Mr. Shafi Daudi* thought that Government had a poor case in justification of the bill.

Why the Government were afraid of the judiciary, asked *Mr. S. C. Mitra* who entered into a strong protest against continued encroachment on Indian judiciary by the executive.

Admitting that the provisions in the Bengal or the Assam Criminal Law Amendment Acts were quite drastic, the *Law Member* argued the case from the standpoint of a purely professional lawyer, saying that if the statute provided that persons could be detained without trial the High Court had no right to interfere.

*Dewan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar* considered the section of the Bill barring the jurisdiction of the High Court as most dangerous which should not be treated in a light-hearted fashion.

After *Sir Henry Craik* had replied, the motion for consideration of the Bill was passed by 56 against 28 votes. The House then adjourned.

**14th. AUGUST :—**The Assembly passed by 47 to 22 votes the Assam Criminal Law Amendment Bill. *Mr. Mitra* was the only person who spoke opposing the Bill at the third reading stage.

INDIAN ARMY AMEND. BILL

*Col. Lumby* then moved consideration of the Bill as reported by the select committee. In doing so, he read a letter from the Commandant of the Military Academy showing that the progress made by cadets was very satisfactory and that the academy had made a wonderful beginning. Training there was more in keeping with Indian tradition than obtained at Sandhurst. It was not true that Indian cadets would suffer under any inferiority complex as compared to Sandhurst cadets. He appealed to the

House not to make the question of the superiority or inferiority complex a stunt and give young Indian officers a square deal.

*The President* disallowed Mr. Harbans Singh's amendments which were of a dilatory character.

Remarking that the select committee did not recommend any postponement, *Kunwar Raghubir Singh* said that the bill was necessary. He urged equal opportunities for Indian officers as enjoyed by British officers. He was afraid the principle underlying the bill was dictated by the War Office.

Mr. B. V. *Jadhav*, while supporting the bill, complained that salary and allowances given to Indian commissioned officers were low as compared to those given to officers from Britain. The speaker reminded the House of the assurance given by the Commander-in-Chief in 1931 that the question of Indianisation would be judged in the light of conduct and efficiency of Indian officers seven years after and said that the Commander-in-Chief of 1938 should carry out that promise.

*Sir Abdur Rahim* spoke for three quarters of an hour. He complimented Col. Lumby for his conciliatory spirit in the select committee and for his eloquent speech in the House but the fact remained that Indian commissioned officers, even if duly qualified, would not be able to command mixed formations which would include British Officers. Which meant that Indian officers would feel their progress hampered in higher commands and would not be able to look forward such chances of command. Col. Lumby tried to draw a red herring across their path by talking against superiority and inferiority complex, but the House was accustomed to such things from Government members and would not be taken in by it. (Laughter.) The position of Indian commissioned officers would be like a provincial service officer appointed to listed posts, whereas the I. C. S. received promotion automatically. He wanted an assurance from the Army Secretary that distinction would not be made in higher commands and regulations drawn hereafter must honour that assurance.

Col. Lumby replying to the debate said that the question divided itself into two. Firstly, the position of the Indian commissioned officers in the Indian Army would be the same as of a British officer in British service. Secondly, as regards the British army in India, it belonged to a different service and His Majesty's Government would not be prepared to give complete power of command to anybody who did not belong to that service. But it would be open to the Commander-in-Chief and commanders on special occasions to decide to appoint Indian commissioned officers to command mixed formations. Such issue would not arise for another 20 years at least and he could not say what a Commander-in-Chief or Commander of those days would do when such contingency arose. It seemed to him that it would be very difficult to refuse such Indian officer the command of a mixed formation. Or an alternative would be to keep British and Indian formations altogether separate. He felt that it was open to the House to leave things as they were and not give Dehradun cadets Indian commission, but he also felt that sooner or later if Indian aspirations were to be fulfilled an Indian commission would have to be started and the service cut into two. It was not a question of superiority or inferiority complex, but of two types of service, one British and one Indian.

The motion to take the bill into consideration was adopted by 44 to 31 votes.

#### PRESIDENT'S IMPORTANT RULING

15th. AUGUST :—A very acute and intricate legal situation arose in which *Sir Abdur Rahim*, *Sir Harisingh Gour*, the Law Member, the Army Secretary, *Diwan Bahadur Ramaswamy Mudaliar* and the President took part when *Sir Abdur Rahim* moved an amendment to the Army Bill in the Assembly to-day. *Sir Abdur Rahim* wanted to insert a new clause which would make the status and opportunities for promotion and power of command, rank and precedence of the Indian commissioned officers in the Indian Army the same as those of the British officers in the Indian Army in all units and formations.

To this the Army Secretary objected, saying that it was outside the competence of this legislature under section 71 of the Indian Army Act to legislate in a way which might affect the British officers serving in the Indian Army.

*Sir Abdur Rahim* and *Sir Harisingh Gour* pointed out that in that case the whole Bill was 'ultra vires', as many of its clauses, notably clause 5, 20, 22 and others, sought to introduce legislation which concerned the British officers.

The Law Member, explaining the word "affect", said that affecting means prejudicially affecting, and in these clauses the position of British officers was not prejudicially affected.



The House was in eager suspense when Sir *Shanmukham Chetty* rose to give his ruling on the point of order, and after quoting relevant acts and sections relating to the issue, he held amidst deafening cheers that Sir Abdur Rahim's amendment was 'intra vires' of the Assembly. In support of his ruling Sir Shanmukham Chetty observed: "The legislative jurisdiction of Indian legislature is derived from the authority of British Parliament. Limitations imposed on the legislative jurisdiction of this House are contained in section 65 of the Government of India Act. Whenever the question is raised whether a certain provision is 'ultra vires' or 'intra vires' of this legislature, the Chair has to carefully examine the provisions of section 65 of the Government of India Act. Sub-clause I of section 65 defines the territorial and personal jurisdiction of this House. The amendment and the clause in question have first to be examined as to whether it is covered by paucity of territorial and personal jurisdiction conferred upon this legislature by section 65."

After quoting a relevant sub-section of section 65 of the Government of India Act, Sir Shanmukham Chetty asserted: "The Indian Legislature had got powers to legislate for the Indian forces serving in India. The Indian Forces has got only a territorial connotation and no racial connotation. This House has got territorial jurisdiction over them. The Bill before the House seeks to create a new command of officers called Indian commissioned officers.

"These officers" continued Sir Shanmukham Chetty, "may be composed either of Indians or of Britishers and this House has got jurisdiction to legislate for both of these classes. The amendment of Sir Abdur Rahim seeks to define the status and powers of the Indian commissioned officers who are to be created by the present Bill. It is perfectly open to this legislature to define what the powers and status of those officers could be and would be. So, looking from the point of view of paucity of jurisdiction this House has got right to define the status and powers of the Indian commissioned officers. Since the Indian commissioned officers are to be created anew, they could not obviously have been covered by any of the provisions of the Indian Army Act (Parliamentary Enactment). What the Chair has now to decide is whether the amendment of Sir Abdur Rahim even in the negative manner could affect the position and status of the officers who enjoy what position they have under the Indian Army Act or the King's Regulations. The contention of the Law Member and the Army Secretary is that the amendment will affect the status of those British officers whose status is derived by the King's Regulations. But neither the Law Member nor the Army Secretary have shown me any provision of the King's Regulations by which it is specially provided that a British officer should under no circumstances be placed under the command of an Indian officer.

Sir Shanmukham added, "In the absence of any such provision the Chair must hold even negatively that the amendment of Sir Abdur Rahim does not contravene any provision of the King's Regulations.

Then the President examined the amendment in the light of the limitations imposed by sub-clause 2 of section 65 of the Government of India Act which provides that the Indian legislature has no power unless expressly so authorised to repeal or affect the Army Act, the Air Force Act etc.

Sir Shanmukham said, "Government's contention is that Sir Abdur Rahim's amendment will affect section 71 of the Government of India Act which authorised the King to make Regulations for vesting powers and command on the officers belonging to his Majesty's forces. It has not been contended that the purport of section 71 is to vest power exclusively in His Majesty the King. If the purport of section 71 was that no one except the King shall create any rules to define the command of officers, then the contention of the Government would be right. By incorporation in this Bill the amendment of Sir Abdur Rahim this legislature will not in any way interfere with the powers vested in the King by section 71. If this amendment is accepted the result will be that the powers of command with regard to the Indian commissioned officers will be regulated by this provision. But it would perfectly be open to override the provisions of this Bill by a new enactment.

Sir *Henry Gidney*, Mr. *Yamin Khan*, and Mr. *B. Das* whole-heartedly supported Sir Abdur Rahim's amendment. They would have the entire Bill chucked out rather than see the Government not agreeing to accept this amendment. Sir *Henry Gidney* said that there should be no more camouflage and the situation that the British officers are unwilling to be equal in status to the Indian officers must be ended by all costs. Sir Henry characterised Sir Shanmukham Chetty's ruling as one of the greatest he had seen during the last 14 years of his membership. The temper of the House was at once realised when the Government detected that even

their habitual supporters turned enthusiastic supporters of the amendment. Sir *Frank Noyce* declared that the Government might be prepared to accept the amendment but they wanted time to consider the situation to which Sir *Abdur Rahim* agreed. Further discussion on the Army Bill was therefore dropped and the House adjourned.

#### BENGAL REGULATION REPEAL BILL (CONTD.)

16th. AUGUST :—The discussion was resumed on Mr. *Amarnath Dutt's* Bill to repeal Bengal Regulation III of 1818.

Mr. *S. C. Mitra* said that Mr. *Metcalf* had stated that the Regulation was used to the extent of 75 per cent. in cases connected with foreign and political relations. Mr. *Mitra* had asked for a statement about such prisoners ten days ago, but the statement had not been made so that he could not test the accuracy of Mr. *Metcalf's* statement.

*Sir Henry Craik*, interrupting, said that he had laid on the table of the House a statement the other day, showing that of the 73 prisoners under the Regulation 46 were for foreign and political reasons and 27 from British India for reasons of internal commotion.

Mr. *Mitra* accepted these figures, but maintained that, while the Government could retain that part of the Regulation which dealt with foreign and political relations, it should repeal the Regulation to the extent it concerned internal commotion. His reasons was that provincial and central laws had been passed enabling the Government to deal with terrorism, communism and such other dangers.

Mr. *K. C. Neogy* held that the Regulation was misused. He referred to the case of the late Mr. *J. M. Sen-Gupta*, who was essentially a man of peace, but who on the day he landed in Bombay on return from a trip to Europe, was arrested under Regulation III. The popular view was that this action was taken because Mr. *Sen-Gupta* presided over a Calcutta meeting, which condemned depredation by the police and the local authorities in Chittagong who were accused by a committee, consisting of landed public men, of having caused a riot. Moreover, Lord *Reading* had told them that the material was scrutinised by two High Court Judges, but actually it was discovered that it was not so and the Home Member had admitted that the information which the Government acted on was no more than what was supplied by informers and scrutinised by a senior police officer. Mr. *Neogy* asked Mr. *Metcalf* to seek a separate consolidated law in order to deal with foreign and political obligations, but, so long as men like the late Mr. *Sen-Gupta* could be imprisoned under the Regulation, the speaker would oppose continuance of such law on the Statute Book.

Mr. *Gaya Prasad Singh* said that the Regulation did not impose obligation on Government to inform the accused of the charge against him, with the result that it was possible that some of the prisoners were innocent.

*Maulvi Shafi Daudi* said that the Regulation was out of date and appealed to the European group to support the repeal of such a Regulation in the last days of the present Assembly.

*Raja Bahadur G. Krishnamacharya* abhorred all repressive laws, but said that he would have supported the regulation if the Government had not possessed other weapons. The case of Mr. *Sarat Chandra Bose* was particularly hard. A man who had earned Rs. 20,000 per month would not be so devoid of sense as to bring himself under the Regulation.

Mr. *B. Das* contended that the Regulation was always used against national workers, and with a view to putting down national aspirations.

Mr. *Amarnath Dutta* wanted the Government to give an assurance that the Regulation would be confined to cases involving international obligations.

*Sir Henry Craik*, replying to the debate, answered the various speakers. He told Mr. *Mitra* that 19 prisoners in Bengal were dealt with under the Regulation before the Bengal Anti-Terrorist Act was passed. But in the case of the other provinces, such as the N. W. F. P., no other power existed to detain dangerous terrorists beyond two months except the Regulation.

As for Mr. *Sarat Chandra Bose*, the protest by him reached the Home Member only half an hour before he entered the House. *Sir Henry* said he had been accused of breaking the silence of his predecessor. But he had again seen the documents and this convinced him that his previous statement, namely, that Mr. *Bose* was deeply involved in the terrorist movement, was quite correct.



Mr. G. P. Singh : Will you let him clear his conduct by a trial, even held in camera ?

*Sir Henry Craik* said that the suggestion required separate consideration. He asked that he would see whether any official record had been kept of the conversations referred to by Mr. Bose. He assured Mr. Neogy that he was not a diehard and wished that Mr. Neogy had not dug up the alleged sins of his predecessors over what Lord Reading said when the point was fully answered in the past. As for Mr. B. Das, if he had studied the views of Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel and even Mr. Gandhi, who would be the future leaders of Mr. Das, he would have known that they did not approve of communist activities. Of the six Communists dealt under the Regulation four were released as not being considered dangerous any more. The Home Member said that owing to the consistency and persistence of Mr. Amarnath Dutt, the subject had been discussed often in the House and hoped that the House could not accept Mr. Dutt's motion.

The House divided and rejected the repealing Bill by 52 votes to 37.

#### MINOR GIRLS' PROTECTION BILL

*Rai Bahadur Raghubir Singh* moved that the Bill to protect minor girls under 14 against their being sold by parents or guardians to bridegrooms, be referred to a Select Committee. Mr. *Sitarama Raju* opposed the Bill on the ground that the Bill was unnecessary as the Sarda Act prevented the marriage of girls below 14. Messrs. *Brijkishor*, *Navalrai*, *Ziauddin Ahmed* and others also made some observations. *Sir Nripen Sircar* pointed out certain technical difficulties in suitably drafting the Bill which was ill-conceived. Mr. *Satish Sen* held that the measure was mischievous as it would interfere with legitimate marriages. *Sir Hari Singh Gour* supported the Bill. *Diwan Bahadur Ramasmami Mudaliar* asserted that social reforms of this nature should be brought about by promotion of public opinion. *Sir Henry Craik* observed that though the object of the Bill might be laudable, it was impracticable. Mr. *Reddi* sympathised with the underlying principle of the Bill. Mr. *Ranga Iyer* also rose to speak when the House adjourned till the 20th.

#### THE PETROLEUM BILL

20th. AUGUST :—Questions over, *Sir Frank Noyce* moved that the Petroleum Bill as reported by the Select Committee be taken up for consideration. The House passed without any opposition *Sir Frank Noyce's* Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the import, transport, storage, production and refinement of petroleum and other inflammable substances without any important modification.

#### RUBBER CONTROL BILL

*Mr. Bajpai* thereafter moved that the Rubber Control Bill be taken up for consideration, Mr. Bajpai explained that the bill was intended to give legitimate effect to the international scheme formulated by the rubber growing countries for restriction of the production, export and import of rubber in view of the catastrophic fall in the prices of rubber. The bill was passed without any change and division.

#### INDIAN INCOME-TAX AMEND. BILL

*Sir James Grigg* then moved for consideration of the Indian Income-tax Amendment Bill which was also passed without any opposition. *Sir James* hoped that the new budget would bring some relaxation in the shape of removal of surcharge on income-tax and customs duties which his predecessor pledged to do if and when the finances of the Government improved. The House then adjourned.

#### THE STEEL PROTECTION BILL ( CONTD. )

21st. AUGUST :—Amidst thumping cheers *Sir Joseph Bhore* moved for consideration of the Iron and Steel Duties Bill. After stating briefly the charges effected in the Select Committee he said that the Government found it impossible to make any compromise in regard to excise and countervailing import duties. But he assured that the excise duty would not be continued the moment the financial consideration permitted it. British structurals and plates would be subjected to ten percent. ad-valorem revenue duty instead of allowing them to come to India free. Government's accommodation in allowing the present protective duties to continue till the end of October, was influenced by consideration for the traders who made previous commit-

ments on the understanding that the present duties would continue till the end of the statutory period. The compromise would mean a loss for the Government to the extent of nearly five lakhs of rupees although it would incidentally swell the Tata Exchequer.

Speaking on behalf of the Democratic Party, Mr. K. C. Neogy unreservedly condemned the imposition of Excise duty. He said he had never before seen four members of Viceroy's Council sitting on one Select Committee. The Home Member was not included and that was the reason perhaps that he had left the House as a protest (laughter). But it would have been fair to include him also to ensure India's steel frame which he represented. Speaking in a purely technical sense and not in the non-technical sense in which sometimes it was used, for example, the Finance Members are dumped into India by Britain. Mr. Neogy proceeded, if the Finance Member was convinced that continental steel was dumped in India, why not introduce anti-dumping legislation by imposing additional import duties.

Sir Leslie Hudson, Messrs. Krishnamachari, Gaya Prasad Singh, Reddi and Bhupat Singh also spoke. After Sir Joseph Bore had replied and the consideration motion was passed the House adjourned,

**22nd. AUGUST :—**Resuming debate on the Steel Bill to-day, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed moved an amendment for omission of the clause levying excise duty on steel ingots. Raja Bahadur Krishnamachariar and Mr. J. Aggarwal vehemently opposed the levying of excise duty. Sir Cowasji Jehangir did not oppose it as he understood that the Select Committee had come to some compromise on this point. Mr. Vidyasagar Pandya enquired what was the compromise. Sir Abdur Rahim stated that there was no compromise but the attitude of the Government was that they would withdraw the bill if the excise provision was deleted. Mr. Mody said that excise duty was like medicine which a prudent patient would prefer to swallow rather than be down with illness. Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh remarked that the Tatas might be prepared to swallow excise duty but consumers who would have to bear the full burden of it must oppose it. Messrs. B. Das, Thampan and Shafi Daudjee also spoke on the motion. Replying to the discussion on Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed's amendment for omission of the clause levying excise duty on Indian steel ingots, Sir James Grigg said that the Government would in no case agree to accept this amendment as no alternative scheme was found practicable whereby the loss consequent on abolition of excise duty could be recouped and that the loss would be near about thirty lakhs which no Finance Member could agree to sustain.

The motion was pressed to division and lost by 55 to 28 votes.

By a series of amendments Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed and Mr. Ramkrishna Reddi wanted either to equalise the duties on British steel with the duties on continental products or give less protection to the States so that the interests of the consumers might be safeguarded specially in the matter of galvanised sheets. But all their amendments were opposed by the Government and consequently lost mostly without any division. His attempt to insert a new schedule in place of the one sanctioned by the Select Committee met with a similar fate. The House then adjourned.

#### MINOR GIRL'S PROTECTION BILL

**23rd. AUGUST :—**To-day being the last non-official day, the Assembly resumed discussion on Rai Bahadur Raghbir Singh's Minor Girls' Protection Bill. The Rai Bahadur wanted leave of the House to withdraw his motion for reference of the bill to a select committee, which was granted.

#### UNTOUCHABILITY ABOLITION BILL

Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah did not move his Untouchability Abolition Bill to be referred to a select committee, as opinion on the bill which was circulated during the last session had not been received from some of the provinces yet.

#### THE TEMPLE-ENTRY BILL

The Temple Entry Bill was next taken up as other members decided not to move their bills in order to give it precedence. Amidst thundering cheers, Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer rose to refer the Bill to a Select Committee to report within a fortnight. Moving the Temple-entry Bill, Mr. Ranga Iyer launched a bitter attack on Congress. He condemned the Congress of indulging in "humbug" politics and dropping the question of untouchables because they could not exploit it. He

appealed to Sanatanist leaders, who stood for eternal truth, to build separate temples near their own ones. He thanked the Government for taking the trouble of ascertaining public opinion on the Bill. The mover explained that he knew the limitations of his motion as it would never come up before this Assembly for further discussion. But he wanted to have the expression of views of the House on the measure. The speaker deplored that prominent Congress leaders who called on him so often promising him their support to the Bill had now gone back on their words as they dare not face the public opinion lest they should fail to secure votes in the coming election. He mentioned Mr. Rajagopalachariar's name, who in a signed statement in the 'Hindu' said that the Congress candidates should go to the electorates on some well-defined political issues and leave aside the questions of temple-entry and untouchability, these being religious matters.

Mr. Ranga Iyer accused Mr. Rajagopalachariar of not saying what he once said and remarked: 'Here is the man who has gone back like a crab'. He felt if a part of the community, a part forming one third of the whole were allowed to remain in exclusion in the name of religion that community had no right to exist. Proceeding, Mr. Ranga Iyer said that Mr. Rajagopalachariar, by his press statement, had driven the last nail to the coffin of the Temple Entry Bill, while the same Mr. Rajagopalachariar and other Congressmen went during the Delhi session from door to door begging for the support of Assembly members. 'Either they were cowards or they had no conviction in the Bill. They had thus betrayed Mahatma Gandhi'.

'Mr. M. C. Rajah, even though economically lifted, could not enter the temples of South India or enter Raja Bahadur Krishnamachari's residence. So the Harijans needed religious uplift. The tragedy of the situation was that non-Brahmins in South India were doing worse than Brahmins regarding the treatment of the depressed classes.

"In the name of non-violence and religion Congressmen have side-tracked the vital issue. Congressmen are cowards and slaves. During the civil disobedience days they put in the forefront women to the shame of India's manhood which was the most unmanly thing to do. Congressmen should remember that the Hindu religion is not a humbug like Congress politics and God is greater than the Mahatma, and these religious questions are bigger than Congress planks".

The *Raja of Kollengode* opposed the bill as it had not the support of the country at large.

*Sir Mahommed Yakub* whole-heartedly sympathised with the measure and asserted if the untouchables were not given equal status in Hindu society, they would welcome them to embrace Islam where they would find themselves in universal fraternity,

The debate took a lively turn when Mr. *Gunjal* rose to speak in Marathi. He went on twitting Mr. Ranga Iyer on his acting in a reformer's 'role' and enquired what Mr. Ranga Iyer had done for the cause he had now taken up.

Mr. *Ranga Iyer*, who did not follow Mr. *Gunjal*'s language, explained that his grandfather built a temple in Chittoor.

*Sir Cowasjee Jehangir* interpreted Mr. *Gunjal* and told Mr. Ranga Iyer that Mr. *Gunjal* wanted to know if he had ever given a torn shirt to the untouchables.

Mr. *Ranga Iyer*: When I joined the non-co-operation movement a decade ago I gave all my foreign suits to the untouchables (Laughter).

Mr. *Gunjal* proceeded to attack Mr. Ranga Iyer, when the latter interrupted and implored the Chair to give him a chance to reply to Mr. *Gunjal*'s charges.

Mr. *Ranga Iyer* said: I understand he is indulging in expressions which is unparliamentary. Would you, Sir, temporarily vacate the chair in favour of one who understands Mr. *Gunjal*'s language?" (Laughter).

*Sir Shanmukham Chetty*: I expect the leaders of the parties will draw the attention of the Chair to such expressions. (Loud Laughter).

*Sir Henry Craik* said that he intervened early in the debate in order to prove that the Government were not hesitating or uncertain in their attitude. He contradicted Mr. *Ranga Iyer*'s statement that last time the Bill was kept out because of a conspiracy between the Government and the leader of the Nationalist Party.

Mr. *Ranga Iyer*, intervening, apologised to Sir Henry Craik and Sir Harisingh Gour for his statement to the Press on the subject.

*Sir Henry Craik* said that in agreeing to the circulation of the Bill the Government had kept an open mind. Now the opinions received showed that an overwhelm-

ing majority was opposed to the Bill (Applause). The opposition was not confined to the orthodox section, but the local Governments and Bar Associations also condemned it. Depressed Classes Associations too were not unanimous in supporting the Bill. Indeed, some of them opposed it and some were lukewarm in supporting it. Support to the Bill was confined to the intelligentsia in the town most of whom, as Mr. Ranga Iyer admitted, were not temple-going classes.

Mr. B. Das expressed indignation at the attack on Mr. Gandhi and said that he, as a Congressman, must stand by what Mr. Gandhi and the Congress had to say in the matter of temple-entry.

Sir N. N. Sircar appealed to Mr. Ranga Iyer to withdraw the motion, though he was fully sympathetic towards it. Mr. Gandhi himself had stated that in matters of social reform the initiative must be taken by the minorities who should convince the majority and convert them in the long run. Despite the tremendous campaign by Mr. Gandhi a fringe of the problem had not been touched and in the speaker's own province, Bengal, untouchability was rigorously and severely observed.

Mr. M. C. Rajah said that they did not want separate temples nor did they wish to become Muslims. They belonged to the Hindu Society and would fight caste Hindus to the last and secure admission to temples.

Mr. Ranga Iyer withdrew motion in view of the opposition to the Bill and the fact that sufficient fire had not yet been kindled in the hearts of even the depressed classes. The House then adjourned till the 25th.

#### [STEEL PROTECTION BILL (CONTD.)

**25th. AUGUST :—**The House resumed discussion of the Steel Protection Bill to-day, and several amendments aiming to reduce the import duty on galvanised sheets and excise duty on Indian steel ignots were rejected as also an amendment by Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed in limiting the life of the bill to five years.

There was some discussion of the question of admissibility of Mr. Vidyasagar Pandya's amendment giving power to the Governor-General to fix a fair selling price of steel products made in India.

Sir Joseph Bhore said that the amendment was outside the scope of the bill to which the President agreed. Sir Abdur Rahim moved an amendment making increasing or decreasing of duty on imported or locally manufactured articles by the Governor-General subject to the approval of the legislature. Sir Joseph Bhore said that in the present case it was not desirable that an action was to be taken by the Government for modifying the duties with the idea of carrying out the intention of the legislature, namely, to maintain a particular level of protection for the steel industry. The powers of modifying the duties in order to maintain a particular level had been left with the Government for many years and there had been no complaint that the Executive used the powers arbitrarily contrary to the intention of the legislature.

The amendment was put to the vote and lost by 52 votes to 30.

The Assembly later rejected by fiftyone against twentyseven votes the amendment moved by Mr. K. C. Neogy for deletion of the proviso in clause two which lays down that duty available on any such article shall in no case be less than the duty leviable on a like article of British manufacture. Mr. Neogy asked what was the "quid-pro-quo" for such a provision, whether it was entirely on economical grounds, or for any political reasons. He feared that this proviso was in the nature of a most-favoured-nation treatment for the benefit of Britain and, if so, it appeared to be a one-sided bargain.

Sir Joseph Bhore assured the House they were not introducing any new principle, but merely repeating what was already in the Act for many years. He reminded the House that the Swarajist Assembly had assented to it.

All amendments having been disposed of, Sir Joseph Bhore without speech moved the third reading.

It was past five when Mr. Vidyasagar Pandya rose to deliver a speech on the third reading. He said that it was no use bringing the Bill before the Legislature when the Government had decided not to accept any amendment. He congratulated the Tatas on securing a substantial measure of protection, but he hoped that they would, in the interest of the consumer and the tax-payer, decrease their over-head expenses, make reasonable profits and regulate their policy in such a manner that subsidiary industries should not suffer. He appealed to the Government to see that the Tatas carried out all this. The House then adjourned till the 27th.



**27th. AUGUST :—**The Steel Protection Bill as amended by the Select Committee was passed to-day in the Assembly without a division. Sir *Joseph Bhore* expressed the general hope that the Tatas would, at the end of seven years, have been able to establish steel industry on a foundation of efficiency and that they would do their duty to the country and not care so much for dividends, and at the same time treat national claims in a spirit of fairness and not of selfish gains.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS

Demands were then made for two supplementary grants for 1934-35 for Rs. 15 lakhs and Rs. 1.52 000 by *Mr. Rau* and Sir *James Grigg* respectively in respect of new railway construction and agricultural expenses in the Sukkur Barrage area.

Sir *Cowasji Jehangir* raised a point of order that the Government of India cannot legitimately incur any expenditure which falls within the purview of the provincial Government. The *President* ruled that the Government of India was not precluded from incurring such expenditure and pointed out that the Government of India had spent a huge sum of Rs. 23 crores over the Sukkur Barrage and they were naturally anxious that this huge expenditure is protected. The Bombay Government was unable to find out this money and the India Government has come to their rescue.

Sir *James Grigg* said the development of Barraige area was of considerable importance to the India Government as they were anxious to see that Sind when separated might be a self-contained financial unit. He did not understand why so much notice should be made over such a small amount when they sanctioned the India Government giving loan to the Bombay Government of nearly Rs. 23 crores.

Messrs. *Neogy* and *Mitra* characterised Sir *James Grigg's* remark as astounding as the question was one of principle and not largeness or smallness of the amount.

*Mr. Maswood Ahmed's* amendments reducing the proposed grant by Rs. 50,000 and 3,600 were lost by 46 to 17 and 43 to 16 votes respectively. The House eventually voted the original demand, division being 46 to 14 and was adjourned.

#### ARMY ACT AMEND. BILL (CONTD.)

**28th. AUGUST :—**Sir *Abdur Rahim's* amendment which sought to incorporate a provision in the Army Amendment Bill according the powers of command, privileges and status to the Indian commissioned officers passing out of the Dehra Dun Military Academy as to the King's commissioned officers passing out of the Sandhurst College, was defeated to-day by 49 against 46 votes.

Before the Bill was taken up Sir *Joseph Bhore* made a lengthy statement in the Assembly, announcing that His Majesty's Government were unable to accept the position envisaged by Sir *Abdur Rahim's* amendment. If, however, the amendment was passed and carried the Bill would be dropped. At the same time, he made it clear that a provision would be made in the Regulations for complete reciprocity of powers and privileges within the Indian army as between Indian commissioned officers and British officers of the Indian army. As for *Mr. Ranga Iyer's* amendment, Sir *Joseph Bhore* stated that the object could be secured by the King's Regulation under section 71 of the Army Act or by such other method as may be decided by His Majesty's Government in consultation with the law officers of the Crown. The following is the full text of Sir *Joseph Bhore's* statement in the Assembly:—

"Before the debate proceeds further I desire to make clear to the House the position of the Government with regard to the Bill and also with regard to the amendment moved by Sir *Abdur Rahim*.

"In framing the Bill the Government have followed out the policy which they announced in July 1932 in connection with the opening of the Indian Military Academy, of introducing certain changes in the organisation, which are implicit in the evolution of a purely Indian army and which will bring it more into line with conditions prevailing in other parts of the Empire. In accordance with this policy they have proposed that an Indian Commissioned officer passing out of the Academy shall be granted a commission on the Dominion model in His Majesty's Indian land forces and shall be subject to the Indian Army Act as a first step towards bringing the whole of the Indian army officers and men alike under the Indian statute.

"The Government have consistently maintained that the Indian Army Act, which besides providing for the legal status of Indian officers of the Indian Army deals



only with discipline and kindred subjects, is no place for provisions governing command, rank and precedence which ordinarily find a place in King's regulations for the army. They therefore confined themselves to giving a guarantee in connection with the present bill that provision would be made in those regulations for complete reciprocity of powers and privileges within the army as between Indian commissioned officers and British officers of the Indian Army.

"They made it plain that on the analogy of Dominion armies, which they were following, it was impossible for an Indian commissioned officer, any more than a Dominion officer, to be granted automatic powers of command in relation to the British army in India, but that His Majesty's Government were preparing further regulation which would enable the Commander-in-Chief or other Commander to appoint occasions when, in the interests of harmonious working of the two portions of the Army in India, an Indian commissioned officer may exercise powers of command in relation to the British personnel of the British Army. His Majesty's Government in doing so, have conceded to future Indian officers in the Indian army more than they have conceded to any officers holding Dominion commission.

"In consequence of the suggestions made in the House that statutory provision should be substituted for verbal assurance which had been given on behalf of the Government regarding command, rank and precedence of the Indian commissioned officers, the Government of India enquired of inclusion in the bill of a section on the lines of the amendment proposed by Sir Abdur Rahim, but limited in scope to regulation of these matters within the Indian Army. His Majesty's Government have replied that it is impossible to accept such a proposal, because the question at issue is one of His Majesty's prerogative. They stated, however, that the exact method of giving effect to the guarantee regarding command, rank and precedence within the Indian Army which is not free from legal difficulties was still under consideration of law officers of the Crown.

"In view of this reply, the Government are unable to accept any amendment involving inclusion in the bill of any provision dealing with command, rank and precedence. Consequently, they must oppose Sir Abdur Rahim's amendment alike in its existing form and in the form which would be given to it by the adoption of Mr. Ranga Iyer's amendment and if that amendment is carried against them in either form, they would be reluctantly constrained to drop the bill with the result that Indian officers who will shortly be commissioned from the Indian commission which will make them subject in all respects to the Army Act and to control by Parliament instead of being subject, as they will be, if Sir Abdur Rahim's amendment is withdrawn or rejected and the bill becomes law, to the Indian Army Act and to the control by the Indian Legislature. This result would be in the opinion of the Government of India most unfortunate.

"The object of Mr. Ranga Iyer's amendment will in effect be secured by King's regulation to be made under section 71 of the Army Act or by such other method as may be decided by His Majesty's Government in consultation with the Law Officers of the Crown."

After Sir Joseph Blore's statement *Sir Abdur Rahim* spoke to clarify the position which was this that the Commission which is to be given to Indian officers graduating from the Dehradun Military Academy will be of a very limited character and they will not have the same power of command, rank and precedence as is enjoyed by the King's Commissioned Officers. He asked the Army Secretary whether it was ever suggested at the time when the idea of the Dehradun out-turns would be in any way inferior to that of the Sandhurst out-turns.

*Col. Lumby*: The Press communique of 1932 issued in July stated that the status of the Dehradun officers will be the same as those of the Dominion officers.

*Sir Abdur Rahim*: But is there no difference between India and the Dominions, where there is no mixed formation (*Sir Henry Gidney*: hear hear?). So far as the Indian officers are concerned they will not have under the present bill automatic powers of command in mixed formations. That being so, what chance was there of India's ever becoming self-reliant?

*Mr. Ranga Iyer* was not surprised that the Government was not even prepared to accept his modest amendment.

*Col. Lumby*, replying, assured the House that there would be reciprocity of powers and privileges between Indian officers and British officers in the Indian army but in cases where the Indian and British army work side by side, the case would be different. He, however, stated that further regulation was under contemplation by His Majesty's Government which would authorise the Commander-in-Chief to

give powers of command on Indian officers over the British personnel in such cases on certain occasions when required for facility of harmonious working of the Army.

Sir *Abdur Rahim's* amendment was defeated by 49 against 46 votes.

Mr. *Ranga Iyer* did not move his amendment, and so the second reading of the bill was passed.

On the third reading Mr. *Reddy* spoke at length giving the history of the Dehra Dun Academy and the agitation in the country for the Indianisation of the Army.

Sir *Cowasji Jehangir* warned the Government that the distinction which they were creating by this bill between Indian officers and British officers will strongly be resented by the country.

Col. *Lumby* replying said that in formulating the present scheme of Indian commission the question of efficiency in the army had been the guiding factor.

The House again was divided when the motion for the passage of the bill was put before it. Great commotion prevailed for some time during the division. The leaders and whips of the opposition parties made frantic efforts to throw out the bill, but as luck would have it again they were defeated by the narrow majority of three votes, the result of the division being 51 for the bill, while 48 against. The bill was passed.

Thereafter Sir *Nripen Sircar* moved that the bill to consolidate law relating to customs duties be taken into consideration. The bill was considered and passed.

### The Viceroy's Speech

**29th. AUGUST :—**The following is the text of the Viceroy's address delivered to both the Houses of the Central Legislature to-day :—

Gentlemen : In greeting the hon. members this morning after my short holiday I need hardly tell you how delighted I am to be amongst you once again to find you still engaged in your strenuous labours on behalf of India and to take this opportunity of thanking you all for the assistance you have given to my Government during the past four years in passing into law the many very important measures that have been brought before you during the period of the life of this Parliament which will shortly be coming to a close. In a message communicated to you on March 6, 1933, I announced my decision to extend the duration of the existing Assembly for such period as might seem to be expedient in the light of the conditions prevailing when the time came actually to effect the extension and on Dec. 22, 1933 I announced an extension up to Dec. 31, 1934. The question whether the duration of the Assembly should be further extended beyond that date required and received my anxious consideration and I finally reached the conclusion the propriety of which has, I am glad to believe, been very generally recognised, that in all the circumstances of the case no further extension should be granted. I am sure that you would wish and here I can speak with all sincerity on behalf of my hon. colleagues, that I should express to the two Presidents my grateful thanks for the fairness and judgment with which they have guided the discussions in both chambers and have secured the trust and confidence of every hon. member. It is my custom on this occasion to give a general survey of the work done during the past year and of the economic and political condition of our country at the present time and further to tell you as far as I can the outlook for the future in the sphere of foreign affairs.

### FOREIGN RELATIONS

I am glad to state that India's relations with her neighbours continue to be uniformly satisfactory. On the frontier between Burma and China incidents occurred last spring threatening a disturbance of the peace among the partially administered tribes which in that area separate the province of Burma from the Chinese province of Yuman. The international frontier in that area has never been demarcated and this circumstance coupled with the fact that there are no maps which have been accepted by both the Governments as accurate encouraged certain irresponsible persons to engage in hostile activities against the Burma military police although the latter had scrupulously refrained from penetrating beyond the line claimed by the Chinese Government. That force effectively demonstrated their ability to deal with these marauders and no operations have been necessary during the last few weeks. Efforts are being made by his Majesty's representative in China to establish in agreement with the Chinese Government certain principles upon which it will be possible to demarcate the international frontier and thus to find a solution for a long-standing disagreement.

## CHINESE TURKESTAN

Events in Chinese Turkestan have caused my Government some anxiety since as the result of a serious revolt against the Chinese authority in Kashgar and the neighbourhood security of life and property were for some time gravely endangered. I regret to say that some loss of life and property were caused to peaceful Indian traders in spite of the unremitting efforts of his Majesty's consul-general to secure their protection. On one occasion his Majesty's consulate at Kashgar was attacked by Tungan rebels and it was only the gallant defence offered by the British and Indian personnel which saved the consulate from more than a few casualties. The Chinese Government have expressed their deep regret for this occurrence and have also officially acknowledged the correctness of the consul-general's attitude of strict neutrality towards the various functions which have from time to time secured control over this area. The latest news received is much more reassuring in that the Chinese forces together with a pacification commissioner entrusted with the task of restoring law and order have now reached Kashgar and are engaged in re-establishing Chinese authority.

## INFLUX OF REFUGEES

Some embarrassment has also been caused by the influx of refugees from Russia and Chinese Turkestan who were able to enter India *via* Gilgit before they could be intercepted. These persons were for the most part completely destitute and were frequently accompanied by women and children whose re-expulsion across the inhospitable mountains of Central Asia was repugnant to humanitarian principles. It is, however, obvious that the comparative security of conditions in India might encourage this influx to a dangerous extent and steps are therefore being taken to check it at the frontier and it is also hoped to arrange for the disposal of a number of the refugees already in India by despatching them to other parts of the world.

## AFGHANISTAN

Our neighbourly relations with Afghanistan have not been threatened by any untoward incidents on the frontier in recent months and it is hoped to secure increased trade between the two countries as the result of the recent visit of a trade delegation to Kabul in April last. This delegation consisted of Mr. W. W. Nind as leader and Lala Shri Ram merchant of Delhi and Khan Bahadur Syed Maratib Ali of Lahore, as members and was sent to Afghanistan to examine in consultation with informed opinion in that country the directions in which it might be possible to foster and expand the mutual trade between India and Afghanistan. The report submitted by this delegation is still under consideration but it is gratifying to observe the interest taken by Indian merchants and traders in the commercial exhibition which is now taking place in that city. The North-West Frontier has remained uniformly peaceful during the last eight months except for the various unimportant disputes between sections of the tribes and a few small encounters between the Government forces and hostile individuals which has always been a feature of the frontier administration.

## NEPAL

I need not say that cordial relations as ever continue to be maintained with our ancient ally, the kingdom of Nepal. As a fitting culmination of the long-standing friendship that we have enjoyed with that country his Majesty the King Emperor has been pleased to raise the status of the British Envoy to that of Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Nepalese court and also to receive a Minister of corresponding rank from the Kingdom of Nepal at the court of St. James in London.

## THE DALAI LAMA

A great figure on the stage of Asia passed away with the death of his Holiness the Dalai Lama of Tibet on Dec. 17, 1933. The late Dalai Lama, the 13th of his line, had always remained on terms of amity with my Government and the regent who has been appointed in his place pending the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama continues to act in the spirit of the ruler of Tibet.

## WELFARE OF INDIAN TRADERS

Lastly I am glad to take this opportunity of acknowledging the keen and effective interest which members of this Assembly have always taken in the welfare of Indian

traders and settlers in foreign countries. There has been more than one case recently in which a foreign country has attempted to enforce particularly in its colonies what appeared to us to be unwarranted restrictions upon such Indian traders who have by their enterprise and commercial ability contributed largely to the wealth and prosperity of the place concerned. My Government have in every case protested vigorously through his Majesty's Government against such proceedings and as has happened in more than one case, their protests have been successful. This is very largely due to the hearty support they have received from Indian public opinion as represented by the hon. members of this House.

#### SAFEGUARDING OF INDUSTRIES ACT

In connection with external commercial relations I would recall to your minds that when I last addressed you I mentioned the circumstances leading to the denunciation of the Anglo-Japanese commercial convention of 1905 and the passing of the Safeguarding of Industries Act, 1933. Applications for assistance under the Act were received from a number of small Indian industries : These were carefully examined but eventually Government decided that it would be undesirable to use the Act since such a step would have prejudiced the negotiations for a commercial agreement with Japan which had then started. At the same time the needs of those industries were met where necessary in another manner. This was by the imposition of minimum specific duties on the articles concerned. The imposition of these duties was secured by *ad hoc* legislation—The Indian Tariff Amendment Act, 1934—and in fixing the level of these duties which were applicable to the imports from all foreign countries due consideration was given to the necessity of adequately safeguarding the Indian industry concerned while avoiding, as far as possible, any increase in the *ad valorem* incidence of the duties on goods the competition from which did not constitute a danger to Indian industries.

#### COTTON TEXTILE INDUSTRY

The question of the grant of substantive protection to the cotton textile industry in India which was the subject of a Tariff Board enquiry in 1932 came up for your consideration in the last Delhi session. I need not refer to the details of the legislative measure with which you were then concerned except to point out that for the second time statutory effect has been given to a rapprochement between the representatives of an Indian and a British industry. My Government and I attach the highest importance to the creation of closer ties between the industrialists in India and in the United Kingdom and consonant with the interests of the country as a whole we shall always be prepared to consider sympathetically any agreement intended to promote the mutual interests of the parties concerned.

#### OTTAWA TRADE AGREEMENT AND AFTER

In accordance with the undertaking given when the Ottawa trade agreement was under consideration an exhaustive report of the first year's working of the scheme of mutual preferences has been prepared and is now in your hands. I understand that this report is now under consideration by committees of both Houses of the legislature and I shall not therefore comment further upon it. When the Indian delegation led by Sir Atul Chatterjee was at Ottawa certain tentative approaches were made by the representatives of other countries within the Commonwealth with a view to the conclusion of further trade agreements. The Irish Free State has followed up their preliminary proposals and formal negotiations between India and the Free State were initiated in May last. These negotiations at which Sir B.N. Mitra and Sir George Rainy represented India have not yet been concluded.

#### ANGLO-JAPANESE AGREEMENT

During the course of my address to you in August last year I made a brief reference to the denunciation of the Anglo-Japanese commercial convention of 1905 and the negotiations for a fresh commercial agreement with Japan. As you are aware these negotiations commenced in Simla on September 23, 1933 and after lengthy discussions an agreement was reached between the Indian and the Japanese delegations in January, 1934. The agreement of views thus reached was embodied in a convention and protocol the agreed drafts of which were initialled by the two delegations on April 19, 1934 and finally signed on behalf of India and Japan in London on July 12, 1934. The convention and with it the protocol are to come in-



to force immediately after the exchange of ratification and will remain in force until March 31, 1937. The provisions in the protocol relating to the restriction of the imports of cotton piece goods from Japan have, however, been given effect to with effect from January 1, 1934 from which date the Government of India reduced the import duty on the Japanese cotton piecegoods the level of that provided for in the agreement. The agreement while ensuring the continuance of the longer established trade connection between the two countries on a basis satisfactory to both, safeguards also the legitimate interests of the cotton textile industry in India and at the same time secures a stable market for a substantial portion of the exportable surplus of raw cotton produced in India. This at a time of acute agricultural distress should prove invaluable to the cotton growers in India who have been so seriously affected by the world depression.

#### INDIAN TRADE COMMISSIONERS

You will remember that in 1930 the Government of India with the approval of the Secretary of State for India sanctioned a scheme for the appointment of Indian trade commissioners in certain foreign countries with a view to promote the export trade of India with those countries. In addition to the existing appointment of Indian Trade Commissioner, London, the scheme provided for six appointments one each at Hamburg, Milan, New York, Alexandria, Durban and Mombasa. The office at Hamburg was opened in March 1931 and an officer for the Milan post was selected on the recommendation of the Public Service Commission.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA

Further progress with the scheme was held in abeyance, on grounds of financial stringency, the officer selected for the post of Indian Trade Commissioner at Milan being retained in the Commercial Intelligence and Statistics department for a period of training. Among the plans for the encouragement of the economic development of the country my Government have, however, now decided to resume the programme for the appointment of trade commissioners in foreign countries. As a first step in that direction it has been decided to open the office of the Indian Trade Commissioner in Italy as soon as possible and with this object Mr. M. R. Ahuja, who was selected for the post in 1931, has been sent to London for a short period of training in the High Commissioner's office before taking charge of his new appointment in Italy. The question of the appointment of Indian Trade Commissioners at other places will receive the early consideration of the Government of India.

#### COLONIZATION ENQUIRY COMMITTEE'S REPORT

'While still on the subject of affairs which involve contact with the outer world there are two further matters of interest relating to Indians overseas to which I wish briefly to allude. I refer, in the first place, to the report of the Colonization Enquiry Committee appointed by the Government of the Union of South Africa which was published both in South Africa and in this country early in July. The Government have been closely studying the reactions of public opinion in this country to the recommendations of the committee. They have also ascertained the views on the report of the Standing Emigration Committee of the two Houses of the Indian Legislature. They hope to be able shortly to address the Government of the Union of South Africa on this matter. In formulating their conclusions it will be their endeavour to serve the best interests of the Indian community in South Africa.

#### ZANZIBAR SITUATION

The second event, to which the hon. members will expect some reference, is the situation which has arisen in Zanzibar as the result of recent legislation was contemplated and the time available between its introduction and enactment was inadequate for the effects of the various decrees on Indian interests in Zanzibar to be adequately studied and represented. Therefore, early this month we deputed an officer to Zanzibar to make investigations. On the receipt of his report the Government of India will consider what further action they should take. The hon. members may be satisfied that in this, as in other matters concerning the legitimate interests of the Indian communities overseas, the Government of India will strive their utmost to uphold them.



## LABOUR LEGISLATION IN INDIA

I now wish to recall to your mind the part that the legislature has played in the sphere of labour in continuing to participate in the policy which I and my Government have set before us of implementing the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Labour. In 1933 you passed an important measure which improved the benefits received by workmen under the Workmen's Compensation Act. In the course of this session a still more important advance has been registered by the new Factories Bill, the most important feature of which was the reduction in the hours of work in factories which work throughout the year from 60 to 54.

I am glad to have this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of the helpful attitude of those of you who represent employers' interests towards this great amelioration in the condition of workers in organized industries.

On the industries side this session has to its credit the very serviceable Petroleum Bill. You have now left to the executive Government the important task of framing suitable rules under these two acts. The helpful and enlightened spirit which has inspired the legislature in passing them will, I have no doubt, beneficially affect their detailed administration.

During the current session you have passed a measure designed to secure conditions of greater safety for an important section of the manual workers of this country—I refer to the Indian Dock Labourers Bill which, when it becomes law, will give effect in British India to the international convention concerning the protection against accidents of workers employed in loading and unloading ships. The Bill empowers the Government of India to make regulations for the safety of such workers and to provide, through a system of proper inspection, for the enforcement of those regulations in accordance with standards internationally accepted and embodied in the international convention, thus filling a gap in India's labour legislation caused by the non-existence of any regulations which could be said to provide adequately for the safety of dock workers while engaged in their admittedly hazardous occupation. The Act which has now been placed on the Statute Book is still another earnest of India's desire to conform to the highest standards in her treatment of labour.

Our progress in matters connected with industries has not been confined to legislation. At the sixth Industries Conference, which met shortly before this session began, my Government's proposals for the creation of a central bureau from which industrialists, will be able to obtain such information and expert assistance as my Government in cooperation with the Governments of the provinces can place at their disposal, met with the unanimous support of the delegates present. I hope to see this organization come into being in the course of the next few months, and though it may seem that the beginning which is being made is a small one, I have great confidence that we are establishing an institution which will prove of real value in promoting the industrial development of this country. The conference also made recommendation regarding the principles on which the grants my Government is making to assist the handloom weaving and sericultural industries should be utilized. Those recommendations have been accepted in their entirety.

## CIVIL AVIATION

In the field of civil aviation there have recently been important developments. As our ground organisation has become inadequate it has been decided to inaugurate a programme of development from loan funds. Accordingly, we hope to equip the Karachi-Rangoon route and the Karachi-Madras route up to Modern standards within the next few years and we are prepared also to organize on similar lines the Calcutta-Bombay and the Karachi-Lahore routes, if these should be opened up shortly, as it is much to be hoped they will be. You have just passed an Act, the Indian Aircraft Act of 1934, which will enable the Civil Aviation directorate to control and encourage effectively this expanding activity.

## DEVELOPMENT IN BROADCASTING

I am also glad to announce that we expect to see a similar development in broadcasting in the near future. My Government have decided to proceed as quickly as possible with the erection of a large transmitting station in Delhi which will broadcast entertainment in Urdu and English. This, we hope, will prove to be only the first step towards the establishment of a complete system of broadcasting covering the whole of India, under which the provinces will have the benefit of an

expression of their own culture in their own literary languages with an element of English programme.

#### ROAD DEVELOPMENT

Both chambers of the legislature adopted a resolution last session which will prolong the life of the road development account. I trust this step will be of material assistance to the provinces in the development of their road systems.

#### COMPANY AND INSURANCE LAWS

I take this opportunity to refer to a matter which is of particular interest to the commercial public. It has been decided to undertake a revision of the existing company and insurance laws in India at an early date. The law relating to companies is that contained in the Indian Companies Act, 1913. This Act is based on the English Companies Act, 1908, which has since been revised and replaced by the Companies Act of 1929. Certain proposals for the amendment of the existing legislation in India have been brought to the notice of the Government of India from time to time by local Governments, commercial bodies and individuals, but it has always been thought more desirable to avoid piecemeal legislation and to await a suitable opportunity when a thorough overhaul of the Act could be undertaken. The need for an early revision of the law has been more keenly felt recently as a result of the growing industrialization of India and in particular, as is already known to you, there has of late been much criticism of the managing agency system.

In the sphere of insurance law also the need for revised legislation is fully established. The rapid development of insurance business in the country during the past few years, not only in respect of the number of new companies formed but, also, in respect of the forms of insurance activities other than life, *e. g.* fire, marine, motor and employers' liability insurance, has created new circumstances in which the existing law has been found to be inadequate. The Government of India have, therefore, arrived at the conclusion that both company and insurance laws should be revised as soon as possible and, as an initial step, it has been decided to appoint Mr. S. C. Sen, solicitor, as an officer on special duty in the department of Commerce of the Government of India to make a preliminary examination of the various proposals for amendment received from time to time and to indicate broadly the lines on which the revised legislation should be undertaken.

#### AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

To turn to the wide field of agriculture, which is still to the masses of India their main source of livelihood and is, therefore, one of the primary concerns of the Government, hon. members must be aware that the Provincial Economic Conference which my Government had convened last April reviewed the position of the agriculturists from the standpoint of rural credit as well as agricultural marketing and production. One of the conclusions reached by the Government of India after consideration of the proceedings of the conference was that all possible steps should be taken to ascertain how far agricultural production in India was being scientifically co-ordinated, and whether any action was desirable or feasible to make such co-ordination more efficient and more effective. My Government accordingly, convened, with the ready cooperation of local Governments, which I take this opportunity to acknowledge, a conference of provincial directors of agriculture, land revenue officers and non-official representatives from the various provinces last June. This conference reviewed exhaustively the position of all the principal crops in India. After a full consideration of all the relevant factors, the conference came to the satisfactory conclusion that crop planning in India had not proceeded on unscientific and haphazard lines, but had been well planned and on the whole achieved its aims of helping the ryot to use his land to the best purpose, but in the prevailing welter of economic uncertainty the conference, if I may say so, wisely held that a machinery should be provided for the systematic and continuous study of problems relating to the cultivation of India's more important crops, such as wheat and rice. To this end it recommended the establishment of appropriate *ad hoc* committees. The hon. members will doubtless be glad to know that this recommendation has been accepted by my Government. It is hoped that by this means periodical stock-taking of the position of our principal crops and of their prospects in the world's markets will be greatly facilitated. The value of continuous study and periodical review in this respect cannot be over-estimated. Adjustment of agricultur-

al activity of a country to changing conditions of demand is necessary for the prosperity of the agriculturist. Difficulties of such adjustment in a country of the size of India are evident. Adaptation to changing needs of the market will be impossible of accomplishment without the acquisition and maintenance upto date of all relevant information.

#### MARKETING OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE

Another problem of even greater practical importance to the agriculturist is the marketing of his produce to the best advantage. This subject was also discussed in the Provincial Economic Conference where there was general agreement that an intensive programme to develop marketing facilities for agricultural products offered the best immediate prospect of substantial results. The matter has been under close examination since the Economic Conference concluded. With the help of the marketing expert, who recently joined the staff of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, a programme of work has been drawn up, which, it is hoped, will very shortly be initiated.

#### RANGE OF MARKETING ACTIVITIES MUST BE WIDE

Experience gained elsewhere shows that the range of marketing activities must be wide. It must, for example, include the organization of an efficient intelligence service in external markets regarding Indian products and the requirements of consumers, both abroad and in this country. An efficient marketing organization must also ensure the grading, sorting and bulking of the main staple products and the establishment and development of regulated markets in India. The first task is the undertaking of market surveys for the purpose of ascertaining the data on which future developments can be planned. The initial step, therefore, will be to obtain and set out in detail the present system of marketing the more important commodities, such as wheat and rice, oil seeds plantation and special crops, e. g. tobacco and fruit as also dairy products in which term I include livestock. This survey will be carried out not only in each of the provinces separately, but also deal with inter-provincial, inter-state and foreign trade so as to provide an all-India picture of existing conditions and a common basis for future progress. The report on each survey will set out in precise technical detail definite suggestions regarding marketing organisation with a view to improving existing conditions in the interests of producers. The work connected with the execution of these surveys will be shared between the central and provincial marketing staffs; but it is the intention of my Government that at least in the initial stages the cost should be met from central revenues so that the urgent task of ascertaining the data and formulating a co-ordinated plan of marketing organization should not be delayed by reason of the inability of one or more provinces to meet the cost of such investigations. The question as to how the cost of the various organizations and activities resulting from these surveys should be met will be one of the future consideration on the basis of the benefits expected from the plans that may be adopted.

#### FINANCIAL POSITION OF RAILWAYS

I should like also at this stage to make a brief reference to the financial position of our railways. This, as you are aware, has not been all that could have been desired during the past two or three years, though in comparison with most other countries throughout the world we may be said to have escaped lightly. The situation this financial year shows much better prospects. Our earnings are better by over Rs. one and three-fourth crores than they were for the same period of last year. In the nature of things we may expect setbacks, but I am optimistic enough to think that these, if any, will be temporary and that the increased prosperity of our railways is at least an indication of a general revival of trade and commerce throughout the country.

#### OPENING OF VIZAGAPATAM HARBOUR

As you are no doubt aware I had the privilege of performing the formal opening ceremony on December 19 last of the Vizagapatam harbour. The development of the harbour has been proceeding steadily and with the improved facilities, which it is the constant aim of the administration to provide, it will, it is hoped, be possible in the not very distant future, to open the harbour to vessels of much larger dimensions than can be accommodated at present. There has already been a substantial increase both in the

number of steamers calling and in the quantity of cargo handled at the port, and, as improved facilities become available, it will, it is confidently hoped, attract an ever-growing volume of traffic in the future. Vizagapatam harbour supplies a long-felt need for a safe anchorage for ocean-going traffic on the east coast of India between Calcutta and Madras and should assist greatly in the development of a hinterland rich in natural resources by providing for its produce a convenient outlet to the markets of the world.

#### CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

On the two last occasions on which I have addressed you I have expressed the belief that the march of events would gradually carry the leaders of the civil disobedience movement further and further away from the sterile methods of negation and obstruction. A year ago I claimed that events of the last few months had fully borne out that belief. Civil disobedience at that time maintained a precarious existence and there were signs that the popular judgment had already condemned it. During the whole of the last 12 months that feeling has grown and spread and finally in April last the author of this subversive movement which was started in 1930 and renewed at the beginning of 1932 advised all Congressmen to suspend civil resistance for Swaraj as distinct from specific grievances. A little later this advice was confirmed by the Working Committee of Congress which at the same time adopted the constitutional policy at one time regarded as wholly futile by many Congress leaders of entering the legislatures. I was myself away from India during the concluding stage of these events but the policy announced by the Government of India on June 6, 1934, had my full approval. That policy has been criticised in some quarters as half-hearted and ungenerous but, as I said in my speech in this House in September, 1932, we should be failing in our duty if we did not ensure to the best of our ability not merely that civil disobedience was brought to an end but that there should be no chance of reviving it.

Thus though the ban on purely Congress organizations was removed we could not take the risk of allowing freedom to those more revolutionary organizations which were distinct from Congress though working at one time more or less in close association with its objects; still less could we give up the special powers which had been found necessary for dealing with the movement and which had been given to local Governments by the Acts of this legislature or the provincial legislatures. The curtain has thus fallen, I hope, finally on the civil disobedience movement and one of the objects of the policy which I indicated in September, 1932 has been achieved. That happy result I do not attribute so much to the action taken by the Government as to the sturdy good sense of the mass of the people of India whose representatives you are and whose opinions you reflect. They recognise that true progress cannot be secured by carrying on an unmeaning and futile struggle with constitutional authority or by revolutionary methods. There is now, I think, throughout the country a general recognition of the truth that the right road to progress is not through coercion or mass action and it is because of this that I have the confident hope that civil disobedience will not or cannot be revived.

#### IMPROVEMENT IN TERRORIST SITUATION

The problems before us, social, economic and political, are many but a solution can be found to these difficult problems if all classes of political thought in the country devote themselves to the task in a spirit of friendly co-operation. Once again I can chronicle a further improvement in the terrorist situation in Bengal but incidents such as the dastardly attack on his Excellency Sir John Anderson show that the terrorist organisation though on the whole greatly weakened is still strong in some places and that we are not free from the danger of isolated outrages whether they take the form of attacks on Government officers or of equally cowardly attacks on persons wholly unconnected with Government with the object of obtaining funds to keep the movement alive. But that attack on Sir John Anderson, providentially wholly unsuccessful, undoubtedly had the effect of rousing public opinion against terrorism as perhaps nothing else could have done and called forth from all sides condemnation of the cult of assassination. In fact the most satisfactory feature of the last few months has been that there are distinct signs that a definite stand against terrorism would be welcomed in many quarters where in the past it might have been regarded as anti-national. The provincial Councils of Bengal and of Assam have passed by large majorities the legislation which the local Government



considered necessary for dealing with this evil and you gentlemen of the central Legislature have also accepted the legislation which we had to put before you to supplement the local Acts but outside the legislature also public opinion is strengthening and I trust that the appeal recently issued by leaders of all shades of opinion in Bengal and the conference which they are summoning will result in practical steps being taken to create a healthier atmosphere in Bengal and to prevent the youth of the province from being contaminated with these dangerous ideas. In this they will, I know, receive all possible support from his Excellency Sir John Anderson and his Government who recognise that legislation and police action will not by themselves eradicate this hideous evil. Public opinion alone can do that and I am glad to see that so many of those in a position to guide that opinion in Bengal have now realised their responsibilities and have come forward openly with constructive suggestions for the protection of the youth of their province from the insidious approaches of the terrorists by providing them with wider opportunities of useful service for their country.

#### SILVER JUBILEE OF KING'S ACCESSION

Next year we shall be celebrating the 25th anniversary of the accession to the throne of his Majesty the King Emperor and I have received and accepted an invitation from his Majesty's Government to send certain official representatives from India to join in the celebration in London. My Government are now in communication with local Governments and rulers of Indian States as to the best and most fitting manner in which this auspicious occasion should be recognised in India. The King-Emperor has been pleased to intimate that it is his Majesty's desire that celebrations should be on a basis and that his Majesty's subjects should, wherever practicable, have the opportunity of observing the occasion near their homes. It is his Majesty's express wish also that celebrations should be as simple as is possible and that all undue expenditure should be avoided. I feel sure that when the time comes the princes and people of India will loyally comply with his Majesty's wishes and at the same time join with their fellow citizens throughout the length and breadth of the British Empire in celebrating the silver jubilee of our beloved sovereign's reign.

#### COMING REFORMS

I think you may expect me to give some account of the impressions I have brought back here as a result of my two months' visit to England and of the general atmosphere towards the reforms scheme which has been under consideration for some years and is now reaching its final stages. It will, I am sure, be obvious to you all knowing Parliamentary procedure, as you do, that it would not be possible for me to forecast information as to what recommendations the report of the Joint Select Committee of Parliament is likely to contain, nor again can I set your minds at rest as to the date of publication of the report for no final decision had been reached on that point when I left. As you know the committee has dispersed for the summer recess, but will reassemble early in Oct. in order to carry its work to completion before Parliament is prorogued. During my short stay at home I had many opportunities of meeting and having discussions with all sorts and conditions of people, with members of Houses of Parliament, with those interested in trade and commerce and business in India and with many others, both men and women, who, for one reason or another, were keenly interested in Indian affairs. The general impression I have brought back with me is that the feeling amongst my countrymen in England is full of goodwill and sympathy for the natural aspirations of Indians in regard to political advance. A deep sense of the responsibility was moreover evident on all sides in the general anxiety to obtain first hand information from those of us who have had the most recent experience of the affairs and conditions in this country. I should like to add that I came back with feelings of the keenest appreciation which, I am sure, will be shared by every member of both our legislative chambers and by the public outside, of the untiring labours which the members of the Joint Select Committee have freely and readily given during the 15 months to secure a proper solution of the great problem of Indian reforms.

#### AN ASSURANCE

One assurance I confidently give you. When the new Constitution Bill is passed into law you may rely on my efforts to ensure that no time will be lost in carrying into



effect, as expeditiously as possible, the intentions of Parliament as expressed in the Act. I have spoken of the responsibility of my countrymen at this present juncture, but we who live and work here and who have position and influence in the public life of this country have a great responsibility too during the coming months. It will be our duty to guide public opinion in the highest interests of all classes of our people.

Let us put aside all racial feelings, if such still exist, let us believe in each other's sincerity of purpose to continue working towards the fulfilment of our cherished hopes for the welfare and advancement of this country. I would ask you to look around the world at the present time and amid all the troubles, anxieties and possible dangers that we see in many countries and in diverse lands, we can proudly feel that within the territories of the British Empire conditions are both sound and stable and that we are slowly and steadily recovering from the world depression which has so seriously affected us all.

For the greater part of my public life I have served the British Empire in its outward parts and far the greatest number of years of that life have been spent in this country which I have always looked upon as my second empire home. During that life I have become more and more convinced that it is by the influence and example of the friendship and close cooperation within our empire that we shall more and more exercise and influence in securing peace and goodwill in what is now a very distracted and unsettled world. With this in my mind let my last word to hon. members at the close of this Parliament be a heartfelt prayer that as our two races by fate or destiny were brought together long years ago to work for the development and prosperity of India so in the future, and particularly in the critical days that lie before us, Providence should guide us to still secure the fulfilment of those political hopes and aspirations which many of us have striven for many years.

#### INDIAN NAVY (DISCIPLINE) BILL (CONTD.)

After the Viceroy's speech, *Col. Lumby* moved consideration of the Bill providing for application of the Naval Discipline Act to the Indian Navy as reported by the select committee. He emphasised that the sole principle underlying the bill was mere change in designation and would not commit the House to any additional expenditure upon the strengthening or equipment of the Indian navy. The effect of the bill would be indirectly to increase the status and efficiency of service. This was the first step taken to provide adequate forces to carry out the local naval defence of India's ports and shipping. When public opinion demanded further advance in this direction the Government would not stand in the way. As regards Indianisation, they would regulate recruitment in proportion to one Indian to two British officers. At present there were only three actually serving with the squadron. But they would soon have 14 officers to designate. As a result of the last debate on this bill there has been a number of applications for service. When the bill became law it would be definitely laid down that the Indian naval forces be employed for purposes in India alone and not taken over by the Admiralty without consulting the Indian legislature or the Indian Government as at present.

*Sir Henry Gidney* criticised the top-heavy expenditure over the royal marine upon which they spent 15 lakhs. Why not take the *Dufferin* lads for the navy and utilise all the avenues of recruitment to obtain the most suitable men? The present rate of Indianisation was a camouflage.

A brief debate followed in which *Messrs. Jadhav, G. P. Singh, Ranga Iyer, James* and *Jog* joined in congratulating the Army Secretary for his friendly attitude in the select committee and acknowledged the benefit which the bill would confer on the personnel of R. I. M. in the elevation of their status and *Messrs. Jadhav, G. P. Singh* and *Jog* urged the acceleration of Indianization.

*Col. Lumby*, replying to the debate, said that it had been definitely stated by the Government that Indianization would proceed at the rate of one Indian to two Europeans but as a matter of fact since 1926 the Government had exceeded that promise by recruiting 14 officers instead of six when more than 14 officers would be actually in service. The Government would consider the question of increasing the proportion of one and three.

The motion was passed and the bill was passed clause by clause, there being only one minor official amendment which was accepted. There was no debate on the third reading and the bill was passed amidst applause. The House then adjourned.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE REPORT

**30th. AUGUST :—**Questions over, the Public Accounts Committee's Report for the year 1932-33 was next discussed. Mr. *Das* criticised the huge expenditure of the London Stores Department, and wanted its expenditure to diminish with the increasing work for the Indian Stores Department in India under the rupee tender system. Referring to the Capitation Tribunal Report, he quoted the London auditor's report, and said that the net result was nil. Why should India pay the capitation charge at all for the army occupation in India ?

Mr. *P. R. Rau*, Financial Commissioner, Railways, said that the Government were considering the question of abandoning or retaining the concession to military traffic, and it was hoped that would be settled before the next budget was introduced. The question of amalgamation of State railways was receiving the Government's attention. Sir *Frank Noyce* said that the only charge against the departments under him was that the London Stores Department was too expensive. He showed that with the decrease of business done by that department, their working expenses had also considerably gone down. The reduction of expenditure was not in proportion with the reduction in business, as the London Department was doing the work of assisting the Indian Department in making purchase. The amalgamation of the London and the Indian Departments was bound to occur sometime, but just now there were some difficulties in the way.

Then Sir *James Grigg* moved that a supplementary sum not exceeding Rs. 7 lakhs be granted as the first instalment towards expenditure involved in removal of the Pusa Agricultural Institute to Delhi. Mr. *Gaya Prasad Singh* made a long speech opposing the proposal and quoted extensively from newspapers, showing that the scheme involved a huge cost. The debate had not concluded when the House adjourned.

**31st. AUGUST :—**The Assembly met to-day to conclude its session and discuss the case of the salt industry and receive the report of the Ottawa Committee.

OTTAWA COMMITTEE'S REPORT\*

Sir *Joseph Bhore* presented the Assembly Committee's report on the Ottawa Agreement and amendment to rules. Thereafter he made the promised statement regarding India's position in respect of exchange restrictions in Germany. He was asked further questions on it by Mr. *Mody*, Sir *Abdur Rahim* and Mr. *Neogy*. Sir *Joseph Bhore's* statement and replies stated that Germany had taken restriction measures in self-defence, that there was no information that India had been discriminated against and that if information which had been called for showed that discrimination was made against India, the Government of India would do everything in their power to see that such discrimination was removed. (Applause). Sir *Joseph Bhore* further added that the restrictions seemed so far to have affected the exports of comparatively minor (?) importance and not affected commodities like cotton, jute, rice, raw hides, skin and oilseeds. The Government of India had also asked for information as to how India stood in relation to the recent exchange agreement between Germany and the United Kingdom. The Commerce Member thought that the Indian Trade Commissioner at Hamburg had not been able to inform them of the developments as these had been too rapid. Sir *Joseph Bhore* agreed to keep the trading community informed of whatever information the Government received from time to time.

TRANSFER OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

The House started discussion on the grant regarding the transfer of the Agricultural Research Institute to Delhi. *Maulana Shafi Daudee* vehemently objected to the transfer and emphasised that better research work could be conducted at Pusa than near noisy Delhi. *Raja Bahadur G. Krishnamachari* strongly supported the transfer but wanted the Government to be merciful to the province of Bihar and Orissa which had suffered in other directions as well, namely, earthquake and flood.

The discussion on the salt resolution having been postponed, the Assembly session concluded at four o'clock in the afternoon and the members shook hands with the president who wished them all good luck. The session was then adjourned *sine die*.

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\* For the text of the report see *postea* under section "India Abroad."

# The Bengal Legislative Council

WINTER SESSION—CALCUTTA—10th to 22nd. DECEMBER 1934

## REDUCTION OF ELECTRICITY RATES

The winter session of the Bengal Legislative Council commenced at Calcutta on the 10th. December 1934, with the *Hon'ble Sir Manmatha Nath Roy Choudhury* in the chair. The day was devoted to the discussion of non-official resolutions. After several members were sworn in, the President, on behalf of the House, congratulated His Excellency Sir John Anderson on his providential escape from the hands of two assassins in the Leborg Race Course a few months ago and expressed abhorrence and the strongest possible condemnation of terroristic methods and terroristic crimes.

The House disposed of only one resolution of Mr. N. K. Basu, recommending to the Government to constitute forthwith an Advisory Board for the province under section 35 of the Indian Electricity Act, 1910, consisting of not more than five members, two of whom shall be elected by the non-official members of the Legislative Council and one by the Corporation of Calcutta. The idea of the appointment of such a Board got support from all sections of the House and was ultimately carried in an amended form in which the portion relating to the personnel of the Board was deleted.

In moving the resolution, Mr. N. K. Basu said that since the passing of the Act electrical operations in the province had increased by leaps and bounds, but no advisory board had been set up till now. It was now time that an advisory board should be set up. So far as Calcutta was concerned there was a great deal of dissatisfaction and discontent regarding the rate at which electricity was being supplied to the consumers. The speaker had seen a poster which said that electricity was cheaper in Calcutta than anywhere else in the world. But they were to consider whether the rate was cheap enough for the poorest people in the world. For some time past they had controversies in the press and much ink had been split over the matter but it remained where it was. It was for the Council to determine whether an advisory board should be appointed to go into those questions or not.

His submission was that the advisory board appointed by the Government would certainly exert a moral pressure and if it was found that the rate could be reduced with a reasonable margin of profit for the company, the speaker saw no reason why it should not be done. In Europe and the United States profits of all the public-utility companies were not allowed to indulge in profiteering. The profit of the company was, on paper, about 15 per cent. last year on their so-called shares. Even if it were 15 per cent. that was too much.

It had been suggested, proceeded Mr. Basu, that the attack by the Indian press upon the Electric Supply Corporation was due to the fact that it was a British company. It might be partially true. They knew that all the huge profits made by the Corporation were sent out of the country, not a farthing being spent for the benefit of the children of the soil. It had been not only suggested but proclaimed to the world that the rates of the Electric Supply Corporation were lowest in the world. But an important factor lost sight of was that labour as well as coal were cheaper here. Besides, if the Electric Supply Corporation persisted in maintaining a top-heavy administration, taking its cue from the Government of Bengal, there was no reason why the consumers should suffer for it. He understood that there was a consultative committee, but he did not know what its functions were.

He concluded by saying that in the interest of the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation as well as the electric companies in the mofussil and in the interest of the consumers, the constitution of such a committee, which had been long overdue, should be approved of.

Mr. F. T. Homan said that the consultative committee had been in existence for a number of years. It consisted of representatives from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta Trades Association, Howrah municipality, mofussil municipali-

ties, Calcutta Corporation and also a member of the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation. Except one, namely, the representative of mofussil municipalities, all the other members were elected by the bodies they represented. Their duties were to enquire into all matters affecting the operation of the company. They held an enquiry recently into the allegations which found expression in the Press concerning the affairs of the Electric Supply Corporation and they came to the unanimous conclusion that the allegations were unfounded and that their rates of charges were intrinsically low and reasonable. At the time of the investigation, Mr. N. R. Sarcar represented the Calcutta Corporation on the Committee. As regards the dividend paid to the ordinary shareholders, Mr. Homan said that it was  $9\frac{1}{4}\%$  and not 15 per cent, as stated by Mr. N. K. Basu. Proceeding, Mr. Homan said that labour and coal formed a negligible fraction of the total costs of the Electric Corporation. He admitted that labour and coal were cheaper in India, but the machinery, tools and plants for the generation of electricity had got to be imported from foreign countries and this involved considerable expenditure. He was not opposed to the formation of the Board and he thought that this would go a long way towards clearing up misunderstandings that had been created. What he wanted was that the Board should be impartial and judicious.

The *Hon'ble Sir John Woodhead*, replying, said that from the 1st January, 1935, the rate was going to be reduced to 2 as. 6 ps. per unit and he thought that it would be the lowest rate in India. He accepted the principle underlying the suggestion but did not consider that the idea of one advisory board for the whole of the Province was a practical proposition. As regards the second part of the resolution relating to the personnel of the Board, the *Hon'ble Member* was of opinion that the Government should have a free hand in the matter of selection of the members of the Board.

After Mr. N. K. Basu had replied the resolution was carried as stated.

#### COURT FEES (BENGAL AMEND.) BILL 1934

**11th. DECEMBER**—A vigorous attack on the Court-fees (Bengal Amendment) Bill 1934 which aimed at putting a stop to the frequent evasion of the existing provisions of the law relating to court-fees, resulting in loss of large sums of money due to Government, was led by Mr. N. K. Basu at the Council to-day.

Opposing the reference of the bill to a select committee, Mr. N. K. Basu said that the statement of Objects and Reasons of the bill very effectively concealed the idea which was prominent throughout the bill, that the court-fees were to be enhanced most outrageously. "I say advisedly" said Mr. Basu, "that the effect of the bill will be to reduce civil litigation in the country and the Government would be killing the hen that lays the golden eggs." The principle of the bill was wrong. The sale of justice was something which was hateful—something which was unknown either to Hindu or Muslim jurisprudence. The effect of this bill would be to make price of justice as high as possible, higher than the litigating public probably could stand. In their own interest the Government should see that litigation was not made more costly to the people.

Proceeding, the speaker said that some of the District Judges to whom the bill was referred for their opinion, though not called upon to express any opinion on the policy of the bill, went out of their way to say that the time was inopportune for the introduction of a bill of this character. In 1922 when the court-fees were enhanced, it was expressly stated by the highest authority in the land that the money so realised from the sale of civil justice would be spent for the uplift of the people and that as soon as there was a chance of the jute tax being restored to the province the enhancement would be withdrawn. But what did they find now? At a time when some portion of the jute tax had at least been promised to Bengal, Government chose to introduce a bill of this character. If there were evasions of the existing provisions of the law relating to court-fees—the speaker did not think there were many—the resources of the Government ought to be ample and sufficient for the purpose of preventing that. The effect of a piece of legislation of this nature would, the speaker remarked, go to create dishonest people. What it would do was to prevent honest people who could not live in amity with his co-sharers from coming to court.

Speaking on behalf of the Government, *Sir B. L. Mitter*, Member-in-charge of the bill, contradicted the statement made by Mr. Basu that the cases of evasion were not many. The *Hon'ble Member* cited facts and figures to show that the cases of such evasion were numerous. The primary object of the bill was to



prevent such evasion. As regards the machinery to be set up to detect such cases of evasion, Government would be prepared to accept in the Select Committee if any better machinery was suggested.

Discussing the objects of the Bill the Revenue Member alluded to Mr. Basu's reference to the restoration of the Jute tax to Bengal and said that the tax was offered certain rigid conditions. The speaker read extracts from Sir George Schuster's speech in the Legislative Assembly where the Finance Member of the Government of India in announcing the restoration of a portion of the jute tax to Bengal stated that Bengal must try to help herself and rehabilitate her finances. Even with the restoration of a portion of the jute tax Bengal could not balance her budget. There was a gap. They must try to fulfil the conditions and fill up the gap to the best of their ability. If as a result of this measure, some additional revenue came to the Government, the speaker thought it was up to the Council to help the Government to get the same.

The motion for reference of the bill to a select committee to report by the end of January, 1935, was pressed to a division and carried by 69 to 21 votes.

#### BENGAL WORKERS' PROTECTION BILL 1934

On the motion of *Sir John Woodhead* the Council unanimously decided to refer the Bengal Worker's Protection Bill, 1934 to a Select Committee to report by December 13, 1934. The object of the bill was effectively to prevent the besetting of industrial establishments and similar premises by professional money-lenders for the purpose of recovering their dues as a first charge on the wages of workmen employed therein. The bill if passed into an Act would, in the first instance, be made applicable to industrial areas, such as, Calcutta, the 24-Parganas, Hooghly and Howrah.

#### BENGAL CIVIL COURTS AMEND. BILL

*Sir B. L. Mitter* introduced the Bengal and Assam Civil Courts (Bengal Amendment) Bill, 1934. The Bill aimed at amending the Civil Courts Act so that individual selected Munsiffs of capacity and experience might be vested on the recommendation of the High Court with power to try original suits up to the value of Rs. 5,000 and that the Small Causes Court jurisdiction should be raised in case of selected munsiffs and subordinate judges to Rs. 500 and Rs. 1500 respectively.

#### CALCUTTA IMPROVEMENT AMEND. BILL 1934

*Sir Bijay Prasad Singh Roy* introduced the Calcutta Improvement (Amendment) Bill, 1934, which aimed at amending section 78 of the Calcutta Improvement Act, 1911, so as to provide that Government may from time to time fix the rate of interest by notifications, subject to a maximum rate of 6 per cent.

#### CALCUTTA MUNICIPAL AMEND. BILL 1934

*Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy* also introduced the Calcutta Municipal (Amendment) Bill, 1934. The Statement of Objects and Reasons of the bill states that the Calcutta Municipal Act 1923, does not contain any express provision for the payment of grants by the Corporation of Calcutta to tolls and mukhtabs or to institutions in which persons employed on manual labour receive primary education. The object of this bill is to remedy this defect, as it is considered desirable that the Corporation should have power to make grants to these institutions.

#### BENGAL MUHAMMADAN MARRIAGES BILL

The Bengal Muhammadan Marriages and Divorces Registration (Amendment) Bill, 1934, which was introduced and referred to a Select Committee in the last session of the Council, was passed by the House which then adjourned.

#### KIDDERPUR DOCK LABOUR STRIKE

**12th. DECEMBER :—**By 55 votes to 23, the Council rejected to-day the adjournment motion moved by Mr. *P. Banerjee* to discuss and consider the serious situation created by the strike of the labourers at Kidderpore Docks. Mr. Banerjee, introducing the motion, made a long speech, in the course of which he traced the history of the strike and emphasised the grievances of the workers. The strike, he pointed out, is the last resort of the worker. It is after his repeated prayers for the redress of his grievances that have been ignored that he takes to action. He recounted how the regular



representations of the dock workers for increased wages and reduced hours had been turned down by the Stevedores Association for a fairly long time and how the dock had explored almost all avenues of an honourable settlement before taking the fateful step. The workers, he continued, were poor and they were not supported by anybody in their very moderate and reasonable demands. He regretted the Government attitude of absolute neutrality, which was one more or less of unconcern, in the face of the apparent need of the workers for relief. This, he said, was the 17th day of the strike and about fifteen thousand workers were going helpless. Surely, it was for the Government to take definite steps, where so many people were concerned. Government, however, had done nothing; nor had the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, which represented the shipping interests which was one of the parties affected by the strike, done anything. He wondered why there was a Labour Commissioner for Bengal.

The attitude of the shipping companies with regard to the dock strikers' strike was explained by *Mr. A. R. E. Lockhart*. He defended the action of the firms of shipowners in supporting the stevedores. He held that this attitude of theirs was justified and announced that they were prepared to consider sympathetically the grievances of the workers if they returned to work. He, however, made it plain that neither the shipowners, nor the stevedores were ready to enter into negotiations with the Calcutta Port and Dock Workers' Union. This decision, he said, did not mean that they were opposed to genuine trade unionism, but that they were not prepared to admit the Port and Dock Workers' Union as a genuine trade union. Several other speakers also addressed the House in favour and against the motion.

*Sir John Woodhead*, intervening in the debate, explained the Government attitude had been that in matters of trade dispute it was better that the grievances at issue should be settled by parties themselves. He was not without hopes that there was an amicable way out of the situation. He referred to the fact that the stevedores had announced that they were prepared to investigate into the grievances of the workers if they returned to work. The workers, on the other hand, were not prepared to return to work before grievances had been redressed. *Sir John Woodhead* added that in order to facilitate the temptation of the deadlock he was prepared to give this assurance to the House that if they returned to work and if within twenty one days of such return no settlement is reached between employers and employees, the Government will appoint a court of enquiry under section 3 of the Trade Disputes Act.

#### WORKING OF LAND MORTGAGE BANKS

**13th. DECEMBER :—**On the motion of the *Hon'ble Nawab K. G. M. Farouqi* the Council approved of the action of the Government in undertaking, in order to provide the capital required for working of the Land Mortgage Banks which have been or will be registered under the Co-operative Societies' Act, 1912 (IX of 1912), for the provision of long term credit to its constituent members, the liability involved in the guarantee of the interest on debentures of a total value not exceeding 12 and a half lakhs to be raised by the Financing Bank for the entire period for which the debentures are made current, the rate of interest for the debentures to be so issued during the succeeding twelve months being previously determinable every year by the Government before the issue of such debentures.

In inviting the Council to approve the action of the Government, the *Hon'ble Minister* referred to his budget speech last March when he announced Government's decision to establish five Land Mortgage Banks as an experimental measure on co-operative lines in selected centres for the provision of long-period capital on easy terms to agriculturists. Since then these Banks had already been established and this motion was now for the purpose of giving guarantee by Government to the interests on debentures of a total value not exceeding Rs. 12 and a half lakhs to be raised for financing these Land Mortgage Banks during the entire period of their currency.

The rate of interest on the debentures to be issued from time to time would be determined by Government for every year at the time. The lending rate to the agriculturists would depend on the rate on which it was found possible to float the debentures while a certain addition would have to be made to cover the cost of expenses of these banks, contribution to Reserve Bank, and the like. It would be conceded, argued the *Hon'ble Minister*, that the rate of interest which might be thus charged would only be very reasonable but would be much below the prevailing market rates in the province.

Concluding, the Hon'ble Minister pointed out that these five banks were by way of an experiment and if, as was hoped, they succeeded, such banks would naturally multiply until there was at least one such bank for every sub-division.

Mr. rising to speak on the motion *Nawab Musharaf Hossain* regretted the selection of the site of the banks. His suggestion was that these banks should have been located in head quarters of each Division and that instead of giving these 12 and a half lakhs to five districts it should have been given to twelve districts.

*Dr. Naresh Chandra Sen-Gupta* thought that Government were running a great risk in initiating the scheme at the present moment when the value of land had suffered a landslide. What were the safeguards, he asked, that had been proposed to ensure the success of the scheme? He thought that the Debt Conciliation scheme have formed a part of the present scheme.

Referring to the criticism of the selection of the site of the banks, *Mr. J. N. Basu* said that it was after a very careful survey that the scheme for the establishment, in the first instance, of five banks in different places had been adopted. It must be remembered that the object of the Government was to help the small holders who had very few friends to help or support them. One very useful feature of the scheme was that the period of repayment was not one or two years but it would extend to twenty or twenty five years.

*Mr. P. Bannerjee* thought that the scheme was a step in the right direction and congratulated the Hon'ble Minister for initiating it.

*Mr Shanti Sekharieswar Roy* dealt with what he described as the "constitutional aspect of the question". The point that he wanted to raise was this, whether it was within the province of the local Government to incur any liability as had been suggested in the motion.

*Mr. J. D. V. Hodge*, Secretary, Agriculture and Industry Department, said that the selection of the site was made under a very careful review of the position and it was guided almost entirely by the success that the people of the various districts attained in working the existing co-operative institutions. As regards the question of safeguards, the speaker had thought that the Government would be attacked the other way about and would be charged with having put too many safeguards. He assured the House that ample safeguards had been provided in the scheme to ensure its successful working. The motion was carried unanimously.

#### WAKF OFFICER

On the motion of *Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Azizul Huq*, the House approved the Government's proposal to advance the cost, to be recovered from the Wakf Fund when formed, of a Special Officer and necessary staff which Government propose to appoint to make a survey of Wakf properties existing at the date of commencement of the Bengal Wakf Act, 1934, with a view to estimating the extent of the income which is likely to be derived from the contributions payable under the Act and the rate which should be fixed for such contributions.

#### BENGAL WORKMEN'S PROTECTION BILL

*Mr. D. Gladding*, Secretary of the Finance Department, presented the report of the Select Committee which was appointed by the House on Tuesday last, to report on the Bengal Workmen's Protection Bill 1934 which aim at preventing the recovery of debt from certain classes of workmen by besetting their place of work. The Bill provides that "whoever loiters at or near any mine, dock, wharf or jetty; railway station or yard; or premises whereon any manufacturing process is carried on in such manner or in such circumstances as to afford just grounds for suspicion that he is so loitering with a view to recover any debt from any workman employed in such mine, dock, wharf, jetty, railway station or yard or premises shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to six months or with fine or both."

The only change made by the Select Committee was that the offence should be bailable. There were three minutes of dissent. *Dr. Naresh Chandra Sen-Gupta* opined that the scope of the Bill was unduly narrow. *Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy*, in his minute of dissent, also expressed the opinion that the bill did not go far enough while *Mr. K. C. Roy Chowdhury*, in his minute of dissent, was opposed to the majority decision that the offence should be bailable.

#### BENGAL ALLUVIAL LANDS AMEND. BILL

On the motion of *Hon'ble Sir B. L. Mitter* the Council passed clauses two and

three of the Bengal Alluvial Lands (Amendment) Bill, 1934 and was considering clause four of the Bill, when the House adjourned.

#### ESTATES PARTITION AMEND. BILL

**14th. DECEMBER :—**Eight non-official bills were dealt with by the Council to-day which lasted for forty-five minutes.

Mr. *Kishori Mohan Chaudhury* moved that the Estates Partition (Amendment) Bill 1933 be referred to a select committee.

Speaking on behalf of the Government, Mr. *O. M. Martin*, Secretary to the Revenue Department, said that Government would not oppose the reference of the Bill to a select committee. Government had carefully considered the opinions received, and while not accepting in full the principle of the Bill they agreed that a case had been made out for the amendment of section 82 of Estates Partition Act, 1897 and possibly for its revision.

The House unanimously agreed to refer the Bill to a select committee with instructions to submit their report by December 31, 1934.

In the statement of objects and reasons of the Bill, it is pointed out that in partitioning an estate under the Bengal Estates Partition Act, (Act V of 1897) rent-free or lakhraj land cannot be partitioned without the consent of all the proprietors. Generally, such consent is not secured and the result is such land is kept "ejmali" and the proprietors of the partitioned estates are to realise cesses according to their respective shares in the parent estate. These proprietors are to pay the cesses to Government, whether they may be able to realise or not. Realisation of cesses by these proprietors becomes an impossibility in many cases and the small co-sharer proprietors are put to much inconvenience and loss. It is, therefore, proposed by this Bill to have such lands partitioned without the consent of the parties concerned along with the partition of the parent estate.

#### CALCUTTA MUNICIPAL BILL

Mr. *P. Banerjee* moved that the Calcutta Municipal (Amendment No. II) Bill 1933, be referred to a select committee with instruction to submit their report by January 30, 1935.

The Bill aims at amending the Act so as to allot one seat to the Bengal Bus Syndicate and 9 seats for the representatives of Labouring classes and to make plural constituencies into singular ones. Mr. Banerjee hoped that Government would agree to refer the Bill to a Select Committee.

On behalf of Government, Sir *Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy* moved by way of amendment that the Bill be circulated for eliciting public opinion thereon by the 15th March 1935. The Hon'ble Minister pointed out that his motion was really a motion for re-circulation because this Bill was circulated in August, 1933. But he found that the Calcutta Corporation had not given their opinion on it. The Calcutta Corporation was vitally interested in this matter and it would be very unfortunate if they went in for legislation amending the Calcutta Municipal Act without having the opinion of that body.

Mr. *Banerjee* accepted the re-circulation motion, which was unanimously carried by the House.

#### UNION BOARDS BILL

*Rai Bahadur Satyendra Kumar Das* introduced and moved for reference to a select committee the Bengal Village Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1934. The Bill provides for the extension of the term of office of members of Union Boards from three to four years. Provision had also been made for the intervention of Civil Courts in the election disputes, while the minimum franchise qualifications had been lowered and education qualifications had been included amongst the qualifications for the franchise. Provision had also been made to disqualify persons convicted of offences involving moral turpitude from being members of Union Boards. The power of Union Courts had been enlarged so as to enable them to try suits for damage by cattle trespass. Union Boards had been empowered to undertake and carry out measures for the improvement and development of cottage industries and to employ requisite staff for the purpose.

Moving by way of amendment that the Bill be circulated for eliciting public opinion by 1st April 1935, Sir *Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy* informed the House that

Government were considering to place shortly before the House a Bill to amend the Bengal Village Self-Government Act with a view to remove some of the anomalies.

Replying to a query of *Rai Bahadur K. C. Banerjee*, the *Hon'ble Minister* said that he could not give any assurance as to whether all the amendments proposed in the present Bill would be incorporated in the Government Bill. The motion for circulation was carried.

#### OTHER BILLS INTRODUCED

Moulvi Tamizuddin Khan introduced the *Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1934*, Moulvi Abdul Hakim introduced the *Bengal Ferries (Amendment) Bill 1934*, Mr. J. L. Banerjee introduced the *Bengal Medical (Amendment) Bill 1933* and Mr. Kishori Mohan Choudhury introduced the *Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Bill 1934 (Section 148)* and the *Bengal Tenancy (Amendment Bill) 1933 (Section 48C 109 and 158A)*. The Council then adjourned till the 17th.

**17th. DECEMBER :—**Sitting for full two hours and a half to-day, the Council passed three bills and accepted the motion for circulation of the fourth.

#### BENGAL ALLUVIAL LANDS AMEND. BILL

The first item that came up for consideration before the House were the amendments with regard to the *Bengal Alluvial Lands (Amendment) Bill 1934* which was ultimately passed with certain minor modifications in the provisions.

The *Hon'ble Sir Bijoy Prosad Singh Roy* then moved that the *Calcutta Improvement (Amendment) Bill 1934* be taken into consideration. The Bill amended section 78 so as to provide that the Government, from time to time, fix the rate of interest by notification, subject to a maximum rate of 6 per cent.

The motion of amendment to the Bill that stood in the name of *Mr. P. Banerjee* not being moved the Bill as stated was passed without any dissentient voice.

#### CALCUTTA MUNICIPAL AMEND. BILL

The *Calcutta Municipal (Amendment) Bill, 1934* which was intended to provide for the payment of grants by the Corporation of Calcutta to tols and maktabs was next taken up on the motion of the Minister for Local Self-Government. *Moulvi Abul Quasem* by a motion wanted to include 'madrassas' among those institutions. The Minister accepted the suggestion and the Bill as amended was passed.

#### BENGAL & ASSAM CIVIL COURTS AMEND. BILL

The next motion by the *Hon'ble Sir Brojendra Lal Mitter* providing that the *Bengal, Agra and Assam Civil Courts (Bengal Amendment) Bill, 1934* be referred to a select committee, consisting of 12 members, including the mover with instructions to submit their report by the end of January 1935, gave rise to certain discussions in the House. The Bill sought to amend the Civil Courts Act so that individual selected Munsiffs of capacity and experience might be vested on the recommendation of the High court with power to try original suits up to the value of Rs. 5000 and that the Small Cause Court Jurisdiction should be raised in the case of selected Munsiffs and subordinate judges to Rs. 500 and Rs. 1000 respectively.

*Mr. Mukunda Behari Mullick* moved, by way of amendment, that the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting public opinion thereon before the 1st April, 1935.

In accepting the motion for circulation the *Hon'ble Member* in charge of the Bill said that though he was not convinced by the arguments of the members speaking in favour of circulation yet in defence to the wishes of a large body in the House he was agreeable to accept the motion. The council then adjourned.

#### DEBATE ON THE JOINT COMMITTEE REPORT

**18th. DECEMBER :—**In the Council to-day consideration of the report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee was taken up. Towards the fag-end of the day, *Mr. S. M. Bose* moved the special motion :

"This Council take into consideration the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Select Committee on the Indian Constitutional Reform and recommend to the Government of Bengal that the proceedings be forwarded to the Government of India for the information of His Majesty's Government and also for consideration by Parliament."



In moving the motion, Mr. Bose expressed his profound regret and disappointment that the Joint Parliamentary Committee, while admitting the reality of India's political aspirations, had carefully omitted any reference to Dominion Status. After referring to the Royal Proclamation of 1921 and Lord Irwin's declaration in 1931 that Dominion Status was the goal of Indian political advancement, Mr. Bose said that the studious avoidance of any reference to Dominion Status in the Report lent colour to the suspicion that this omission was deliberately made with a view to placating the Conservative diehards of England who were opposed to the grant of responsible government to India.

Referring to the financial aspect of the Report so far as it related to Bengal, Mr. Bose recalled that Bengal's claim to income-tax had been partially admitted in the White Paper which had laid down that the prescribed percentage, between 50 to 75 per cent. of the net revenue excluding tax on companies would be given to the provinces, subject to the right of the Federal Government to retain a part of such sum for ten years. The Joint Committee had refused to accept even this modest proposal because of the heavy burden imposed in the Centre by the creation of new provinces. Mr. Bose then referred to the Simon Commission Report which was definitely against the creation of new provinces, but this had been over-ruled by the Joint Committee.

Proceeding, Mr. Bose said that the Committee's recommendations were calculated to hinder the growth of a responsible opposition or of effective public opinion. The weakest point in the proposals made was that no alternative form of Government was possible. The speaker said that he had always been opposed to safeguards and reserved powers which would be incompatible with real democracy but in its absence, he was forced to say that some safeguards, some external checks, were necessary to prevent misuse of power by the permanent majority. But he submitted that a frequent exercise of such exceptional powers would militate against the growth of responsible Government.

The statement made by the Committee in their Report that the Hindu community among others acquiesced very considerably in the Communal Award was incorrect, said Mr. Bose. The recent victory in the Assembly elections from Bengal of a party who offered opposition to the Award showed how keenly Bengal Hindus felt in the matter. Proceeding, Mr. Bose referred to the absence of joint responsibility in the Cabinet. Ministers were to be chosen on communal lines. This would militate against the growth of a vigorous party system and hamper normal progress of the constitution. Such a ministry was a denial of Parliamentary Government. Mr. Bose had not finished when the Council adjourned.

**19th. DECEMBER :—**The *Maharaja of Cossimbazar*, resuming the debate to-day, declared that in many respects the Joint Committee Report had deviated even from the Conservative path outlined by the White Paper. He particularly condemned indirect Election to the Central Legislature and deplored what he called going back upon the definite policy laid down, namely, that His Majesty's Government's policy was Dominion Status for India. Commercial Safeguards were subjected to severe strictures by the speaker who averred that these Safeguards were unheard of. He concluded with an appeal to the British Government to make the proposals more acceptable to Indian opinion.

*Khan Bahadur Abdul Momin* explained the Mussalman standpoint. It was a grave disappointment to Muslims that the Joint Select Committee had not responded to Indian public opinion and that what little responsibility was in store was hedged in by Safeguards. He, however, welcomed the retention of the Communal Award but said that, in practice, the percentage of Muslims in the Federal Assembly would be far less than 33 and one-third per cent, as this percentage applied to seats other than those represented by Indian States. He deplored the unsatisfactory character of the financial proposals in regard to Bengal. Further stiffening of Safeguards was another unfortunate feature. He could not understand the proposal requiring provision for previous sanction of the Governor in every case where a Minister desired to amend the Police Act. This, he considered, a slur on Indian integrity, seeking, as the provision did, to place the Inspector-General of Police over the Minister. Notwithstanding this position, he could not agree with the Congress for rejection of the new Reforms. Although the Reforms proposals fell short of the public demand, he had no doubt that they were an improvement on the present situation. On behalf of the Mussalmans of Bengal, he welcomed the



proposals and repudiated that Bengal Muslims, in a majority, would tyrannise the minorities.

*The Raja of Nashipur* deprecated the stiffening of Conservative policy in regard to India. He deplored the fact that executive servants were placed in a position of power over the head of their Ministers. It was strange that the Communal Award and the Poona Pact should have been agreed to by the Joint Committee. The Poona Pact placed the Bengal Hindus in an unenviable plight. The Raja declared that the Communal Award went back on the principles laid down by the League of Nations and spelt disaster to the Bengal Hindu minority. He associated himself with the previous speaker in their unequivocal condemnation of the safeguards. Finally, he appealed to Mussalmans to realise that the Communal Award was incompatible with national welfare.

Mr. W. H. Thompson, Chairman of the Bengal Council European Group, asked his colleagues to realise that all points of view had been carefully considered by the Joint Committee. He considered that the Reforms conferred very great responsibility on the Indian Government. He pleaded for the acceptance of the Reforms scheme. Referring to the Communal Award, Mr. Thompson admitted, amidst cries of "hear hear," that it left an open sore.

Mr. Sarat Chandra Basu was opposed to the Award and the Poona Pact and hoped that they would not be included in the proposed Bill to amend the Government of India Act.

Mr. J. N. Gupta deplored lack of responsibility which was a marked feature of the report. It was India's emphatic and unanimous opinion that the carefully considered demands of most moderate section were brushed aside by the Joint Committee. Mr. Gupta referred in detail to the injustice to Bengal perpetrated by the financial proposals. This economic injustice implied greater unemployment of middle class youngmen. Even if other parts of the scheme were modified, the Communal Award portion was alone sufficient to dissuade Bengal from accepting the scheme. He appealed to his section of the House to use only moderate language. The Council at this stage adjourned.

**20th. DECEMBER :—**The resumed debate on the Joint Parliamentary Committee's Report in the Council to-day revealed that opinion was as sharply divided between Hindus and Moslems, Depressed classes and caste Hindus and Europeans and so on as outside the Council Chamber.

Mr. J. N. Basu, Liberal Leader, said that so far as the question of satisfying public sentiment was concerned, it must be admitted that the decisions of the Joint Parliamentary Committee had failed to arouse any enthusiasm and had not met with widespread acceptance in the country. Under the proposed constitution, India would continue to occupy a lower place. It must have appeared to the British Government of the question of India's constitutional advancement during the last seven years of discussion that there was no difference of opinion among the various creeds and classes of India—Hindus and Mahomedans, Princes and peasants, that they had felt very keenly about this lower status and unless that grievance was removed, no amount of workable constitution would make India satisfied with what was intended to be done under the Joint Committee's report. He would earnestly urge upon all those concerned with the final stages of legislation to recognise this fact.

Discussing the question as to whether the proposed constitution could be successfully worked, Mr. Basu said that an attempt had been made in the Report to introduce responsibility partially and conditionally in the centre. The form of Dyarchy laid down for the centre was such a new peculiar and expensive form of Government that it was difficult to forecast as to whether it was likely to work at all or not. Coming to the question of provincial autonomy, the speaker said that the word 'provincial autonomy' was profusely used in the Joint Committee's Report but nowhere did they find mention of the Dominion Status. But what kind of provincial autonomy had they been given? Legislative powers had been given to the Governor and the Governor had been drawn into the vortex of every day administration. Was that advance from the present state of things?

*Moulvi Abul Kassem* endorsed the sentiments expressed by Khan Bahadur Abdul Momin on the floor of the House which he thought represented the opinion of the entire Mahomedan community of Bengal.

A voice: Not all.

*Moulvi Abul Kassem*: Yes, of all the educated Muslims of Bengal.

Referring to Mr. J. N. Gupta's appeal to the generosity Mussalmans, the speaker asked: Had anybody ever tried to conciliate and win over the Mussalmans? That, according to the speaker, had never been done.

Taking part in the debate, Sir *Bijoy Prasad Singha Roy*, Minister-in-charge of Local Self-Government said that he endorsed every word of his friend and leader, Mr. J. N. Basu, about the status of India. The speaker hoped that in the final stages of legislation it would be possible for Parliament to introduce provisions for Dominion Status in the statute. The Communal Award and the Poona Pact were a vexed question. But he must say that the Hindus of Bengal felt thoroughly dissatisfied because of the Communal Award and the Poona Pact.

Mr. *Amulya Dhan Ray*: Not all Hindus of Bengal.

The *Hon'ble Minister* continued: Because the Hindu intelligentsia of Bengal will have no opportunity of working the constitution.

*Moulvi Tamizuddin Khan*: Are the scheduled classes excluded from the intelligentsia?

The *Hon'ble Minister*: I will leave it to be answered by the *Hon'ble Member* himself. Proceeding, the *Hon'ble Minister* said that the Poona Pact was an infliction of Mahatma Gandhi on the Hindus of Bengal.

Mr. *Amulya Dhan Ray*: Not all Hindus.

The *Hon'ble Minister*: The upper caste Hindus were coerced to accept it. In the interest of all concerned, in the interest of the Depressed Classes, I would request them to meet us half way. In the interest of the upper caste Hindus, in the interest of the province, in the interest of the Mahommedans and in the interest of us all, there should be an adjustment.

The *Hon'ble Minister* observed that the resolution that was passed by the Congress Working Committee at Patna recently deciding to reject the constitution appeared to him to be very disappointing, very discouraging, from the point of view of the constitutional advancement of the country.

Referring to commercial discrimination Sir *Edward Benthall* said there was a suggestion that British merchants intended to use this clause for their own advantage and to the detriment of the Indian trade. There was no ground for such apprehension. The record of the British business community showed that in recent years they had endeavoured on every occasion to support the just aspirations of India for development of her industries and he did not think that the people of Bengal would deny the fact that the Europeans had done their best in recent years to help along the economic prosperity of this province. He could assure the House that they would not misuse these safeguards so generously given because they realised that generous treatment merited generous return.

Referring to the omission of any reference to Dominion Status in the Report, as complained by Mr. Basu and Hon. Sir *Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy*, the speaker recalled the Viceroy's speech at the European Association where the goal was described to be a position of equal partnership with other Dominions within the Empire under the Crown. He asked the Indians to be patient and said: "If there is any difference between me and my fellow Indian subjects on the question, it is one of method and speed. The time for bickerings for seats, for personal or party advantage is past. We want that front benches in this House should be occupied by people who have something to offer to Bengal and who have worked out a constructive programme and whatever party occupies that front bench I can assure it of the support of the European Group."

Mr. *Amulya Dhan Roy* (a representative of the depressed class) contradicted the statement made on Wednesday by Rai Saheb Sarat Chandra Bal that the scheduled castes were prepared to reopen the question of Poona Pact. The speaker wanted to make it perfectly clear that the depressed classes of Bengal were not prepared to lose a single seat allocated to them by the Poona Pact. The speaker, however, declared that any negotiation for the modification of the Poona Pact must begin by mutual agreement with an open mind and on the basis of separate electorate.

Dealing with the financial aspects of the Report, Sir *John Woodhead*, the Finance Member, said that the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee in regard to Federal Finance followed very closely proposals on that subject in White Paper, and so far as the provinces were concerned, there were only two changes. He presumed that final decision on actual quantum would be taken after conclusion of financial enquiry envisaged in White Paper to review probably the financial position of both federation and provinces. "I have studied the report of the Joint Select Committee with considerable care and so far as I can see there

is nothing in the recommendations which will prevent full justice being done to Bengal's claim to an equitable financial settlement." The House then adjourned till the 22nd.

**22nd. DECEMBER :—**After four days' debate, the Council finished consideration of the Joint Parliamentary Committee's Report to-day by adopting Mr. *S.M. Bose's* non-committal motion. One remarkable feature of these four days' debate was that while the Select Committee's Report was condemned on all sides politically, there was hardly one section of the House that did not feel specially aggrieved by particular recommendations. The Muslim and Depressed Classes members, who obviously stand to gain by the Report, felt that it might easily have been better for their interest. The landholders had their share of grievances; even Sir John Woodhead, who wears the uneasy crown of Bengal finances, had a plaintive word.

Before the debate was resumed, Mr. *Shanti Sekhaheswar Roy* raised a point of order opining that further discussion on the motion could not take place because the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee formed the basis of the Constitutional Bill which was now before the House of Commons and in support of his contention he referred to Section 80 A of the Government of India Act. Mr. Roy further contended that it was against Parliamentary convention that the matter should be taken into consideration and adversely criticised in a subordinate legislature. He also pointed out that neither the Government of India nor the British Government nor Parliament had sought any opinion on this measure. In that case perhaps it would be permissible to discuss and submit their opinion.

In disposing of the point of order, the *Hon'ble President (Raja Sir Manmatha Nath Rai Chaudhury of Santosh)* observed :—I may tell the House that first of all we have to determine the exact nature of the motion before the House and the extent of its scope. Are we really considering the Bill before the House of Commons, or are we criticising the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee? I hold that the motion before us is merely a resolution and the object behind it is to have the proceedings of the debate on their commendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee sent up to the Government of India for the information of His Majesty's Government, evidently for the benefit of those who have framed the Bill and those who would give it its final shape. The *Hon'ble Home Member* should not forget that the Bill before the House of Commons may be revised and changes may be effected to its clauses, either in respect of principle or detail. So, it is not any Act of Parliament or any "law" that we are criticising. We are merely criticising the "recommendations" that have been made by the Joint Parliamentary Committee, on which the Bill before the House of Commons has been based. At this stage, it may serve a very useful purpose if the proceedings of the debate are made available to his Majesty's Government and to the Members of Parliament.

Resuming the debate, *Rai Bahadur Keshab Chandra Banerjee* said that in spite of its many shortcomings and defeats the constitution as outlined in the J. P. C. Report was a real advance on the present form of government. But to a Bengali Hindu all interest in the coming reforms evaporated when he thought of the Communal Award and the Poona Pact.

Mr. *Razaur Rahaman Khan*, deputy President of the Council, wondered why the Committee should have fought shy of the word Dominion Status when Indian opinion was unanimous in demanding that India should be given a position of equality with other Dominions in the British Commonwealth of Nations. He, however, thought that every honest man must admit that the constitution was a great advance on what they had before.

Taking part in the debate, *Hon'ble Mr. R. N. Reid*, Home Member, said Government welcomed this resolution and would forward a copy of the debate to the right quarters. Dealing with the recommendations of the Committee, the Home Member said that the Report was the result of years of unhurried, careful work and he ventured to suggest that with the framework of the recommendations of that Report there was ample room for difference of opinion or discussion. Yet the Indian nation should accept that Report in the best interest of the country and should endeavour to work it. It was idle to deny that the proposals were an immense stride forward in India's constitutional history and in fact, it almost led to the transformation of the political scene. One might remember thirteen years ago the storm of criticism with which the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms were greeted and the forebodings which accompanied their inauguration and yet that constitution had worked. It was true that the machinery had creaked chiefly for want of financial lubrication in this

province particularly, and also on account of the efforts which were made by political and subversive movements to wreck the machinery altogether—the revolutionary movements which had caused their unproductive expenditure to rise to its present desperately high figure.

It was easy to imagine how much better that constitution would have worked if they had an equitable financial settlement and if they were not burdened with a high and unproductive expenditure on account of successive movements. Given good-will and equitable financial settlement there was no reason why the new constitution which was a very large extension of self-government should not succeed.

By good-will he meant to include the disappearance of the subversive movements which had given Bengal a bad name and landed her into such a difficulty.

Discussing the recommendations about the police, he hoped every one would agree that it was necessary for the success of any Government that they should have an efficient and contented Police Force. The two went together. The Joint Committee had recommended two things: that no alteration should be made in the general police act, and no alteration in the rules made thereunder without the previous consent of the Governor. It was vital to a police force that it should not be subject to political changes and that it should feel secure. On the other side it was necessary that the Minister who would be in charge of Law and Order should be possessed of a force which had that assurance. The Home Member ventured to prophesy that the ministers of the future need have no misgiving on the subject nor need they anticipate any difficulty from these proposals in whatever form they might have been embodied in the report.

Referring to the committee's recommendations regarding secret service information, the Home Member said that, dealing as they were with the secret revolutionary movement, their source of information would inevitably be secret, they should be kept secret, otherwise the sources of information might dry up. So long as the secret conspiracy movements continued it was vital that they should keep their source of information safe and those who gave them that information should have that security. By the recommendations of the committee the Minister would not be deprived of any information; he would have enough information to enable him to pass orders if orders were required and to defend his action in face of criticism. But the vital point was that the source of his information should not be divulged. The Home Member thought it was common sense that this provision should be put in. Referring to the recommendations regarding the special powers of the Governor in connection with the suppression of terrorism, the Home Member pointed out that it had been said that Bengal had been singled out for special treatment in this respect. The committee had been gravely impressed with the position in Bengal. After all, they must admit that that was not surprising in view of the past history of Bengal, in particular in recent history, illustrated as it was, by numerous acts which this House had been called upon to pass in order to suppress that movement. After reading extracts from the committee's recommendations in this respect, the Home Member said that the inference of course was that before the Governor took those powers, there would be a discussion. Not until that had been done would he take those powers. Finally, the Home Member recalled the Viceroy's speech wherein he pointed out that there were two alternatives before them; either accept the report which laid down the broad lines of advance namely, provincial autonomy and responsible government at the centre or take recourse to a flat and sterile opposition. And the Home Member ventured to think that all sensible men would reject the second alternative in favour of the first.

*Maulvi Abdus Samad* criticised the observations made by Khan Bahadur Abdul Momin that the proposed constitution was "a great advance" on the existing condition of things and that in spite of certain drawbacks and shortcomings, "the Bengal Muslims to a man" had the general approval of the recommendations of the Select Committee. The speaker recalled what other Muslim leaders more competent to speak on the subject had said about the report. Sir Abdur Rahim, Mr. Jinnah and many other Muslim leaders had condemned the report in unequivocal terms and had expressed their willingness to join hands with the Congress for rejecting it. Quoting the opinion of some of the moderate Muslim leaders and comparing them with the opinion expressed by Khan Bahadur Momin, the speaker asked the House to judge for itself how far his claim to speak as the *de facto* and *de jure* leader of the Muslim community was supported by the opinions expressed by other Muslim leaders.



The next important point in the Khan Bahadur's speech which required consideration was his remark that "it is good government and not self-government that we need." That was exactly the argument, remarked the speaker, used by Mr. Churchill against the introduction of responsible government in India. Mr. Churchill's contention was not accepted by other British politicians who held that good government was not equivalent to self-government. It was a pity that the Khan Bahadur was trying to outchurch Mr. Churchill. Nothing better to be expected from an ex-commissioner of a division. In fact he spoke in the voice of the bureaucracy and not the voice of the Khan Bahadur, the accredited leader of the Muslim community.

Another point in the Khan Bahadur's speech which the speaker dealt with was his views about the Communal Award. The Khan Bahadur held the award as the Magna Charta of the Muslim community, but in the opinion of the speaker it was on this ground and not on the ground that it affected the interests of the Hindu community that he had consistently raised his voice of protest against the pernicious system of separate electorate. It was a device very ingenuously planned to keep the Muslim community permanently segregated from their politically, educationally and economically more advanced neighbours, the Hindus, with a view to prevent the growth of patriotism and nationalism among the Muslims, ideals which a community must keep before its mind if it ever aspired to attain political freedom.

The speaker said that it was not yet too late for the Government to revise their policy and to concede to the Muslims of Bengal absolute majority on the basis of joint electorate by reducing the number of seats allotted to the European community, a position, which the speaker knew, the Hindus would gladly accept. Unless that was done, the proposed reforms would bring no peace in the land and the constitution would not be worth the paper on which it was written.

The *Hon'ble Nawab K. G. M. Farouqi* thought that after the tumult and bustle of the controversy had died down it would be recognised that the proposals were a big step forward. They combined in them the three essential principles in the demand, so far made by the people of India, namely provincial autonomy along with an All-India Federation brought about in a comprehensive scheme with responsibility in the centre. The *Hon'ble Minister* thought that the proposed checks and safeguards had been recommended in view of the existing facts and conditions in India. They were not intended to impede the development of self-government but were a necessary support. He appealed to all sections—particularly to the two great communities, Hindus and Mussalmans,—to sink their differences, to be tolerant of each other, to have regard for each other's feelings and susceptibilities and to combine together for the purpose of working the new constitution harmoniously and in a spirit of goodwill.

*Mr. P. Banerjee* thought that it was a scheme of reforms unworthy of a great nation to offer and unworthy of even a small nation or a helpless subject to accept. India should not accept such a gift. Not because it had little substance in it but because it would be suicidal inasmuch as it contained the seeds of disruption which in their noxious growth would strangle nationalism and split the Indian people into warring camps of conflicting communities and vested interests. It would spell disaster to the growth of nationalism in India.

The *Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Azizul Haque* did not claim that the details of the scheme did not admit of further improvement but he would ask them to pause and consider if what had been suggested was not an advance on the existing state of things. Electorates had been enlarged by millions. The Lower House was to consist of elected representatives of the people and there would be no official block. As regards the safeguards these were preserved for the time being with a view to see how the machinery worked. Referring to the Prime Minister's decision, the *Hon'ble Minister* said that they had been discussing the Hindu-Moslem problem for the last eight years but they had not yet been able to come to an agreed settlement in this matter. Referring to *Mr. J. N. Gupta's* appeal to the generosity of the Muslims, the *Hon'ble Minister* said that the Muslims had all along been generous whenever any demand had been made of them.

Following the acceptance of *Mr. S. M. Bose's* motion, the Council was *prorogued*.



# The Madras Legislative Council

AUTUMN SESSION—MADRAS—1st. to 4th. AUGUST 1934.

## THE MADRAS DEBTORS' PROTECTION BILL

The Madras Legislative Council commenced its autumn session at Madras on the 1st. August 1934 with Mr. B. R. Reddi, President in the chair. The President announced after the interpellation time that the Governor's assent had been given to the following Acts :—

(1) *The Madras Nurses and Midwives Amendment Act* (2) *the Madras Estates Land Act* (3) *the Madras Co-operative Land Mortgage Banks Act* and (4) *the Madras Local Authorities Entertainment Tax Amendment Act*.

The Madras Debtors' Protection Bill, as amended by the Select Committee, was the first to come up for third reading. The Bill aims at regulating the business of money-lending and pawn-broking carried on by private individuals. An important provision of the bill insists on the money-lenders carrying on business in the Madras province maintaining accounts periodically to parties taking loans.

The second important provision in the bill is that money-lenders should not charge interest on secured loans more than 24 per cent.

Discussions on the amendments then took place. When the clause relating to interest was taken up the Member announced that intimation had been received from the Government of India to the effect that the Government of India itself was considering a comprehensive scheme for all the provinces and accordingly suggested that the clause may be adopted.

Mr. C. Basudev, mover of the Bill, accepted the suggestion. This roused a storm of protest from non-officials. Sir A. P. Patro and Sami Venkatachalam Chetti disapproved of the attitude of the mover of the bill in accepting amendments which defeated the very object of the bill. They said the bill becomes useless without fixing the maximum rate of interest leviable by the creditors.

Sir A. P. Patro moved that further consideration of the bill be adjourned for a year. At this stage the Council stood adjourned.

## ESTATES LAND ACT AMENDING BILL

2nd. AUGUST :—Official business was transacted at to-day's meeting of the Council.

The Hon'ble Sir Archibald Campbell introduced the Bill further to amend the Madras Estate Act, 1908 and the Madras Estates Land (Amendment) Act, 1934 and moved that the Bill be referred to a select committee.

It would be within the recollection of the hon. members, Sir Archibald Campbell said, that on March 22nd of this year H. E. the Governor, Sir George Stanley returned the Madras Estates Land Act Amending Bill to this House with a message recommending the deletion of certain clauses which had been passed by the House. The reason he gave in his message and his recommendations were as follows :

"Although notice of the principal amendments regarding imamdars had been before the Council since January 1933, I am satisfied that imamdars did not anticipate that those amendments would be incorporated in the Bill. In view of the complexity of the question involved, which, in my opinion, requires further consideration by the Council, I think it should be dealt with in a separate Bill which will be introduced by the Government early in the next session of the Council."

Continuing, Sir Archibald Campbell said that in accordance with the undertaking in His Excellency's message and in his (Sir Archibald's) speech, he was introducing this Bill. He had not set out at considerable length in the statement of objects and reasons of the Bill the reasons which had led the Government to undertake this legislation. Briefly, these were that the Government and the courts for a considerable period, for a century or so, regarded that the tenants in an imam village had prima facie kudivaram rights, and that the onus of proof that the imamdars had the kudivaram right—this fact could be proved by Government records that he

might have—did lie *prima facie* on the imamdar. That practice was interfered with by the ruling of the Privy Council on 1st July 1918 under which it was stated that the onus lay upon the tenant, and the subsequent rulings that the burden of proof did not lie either on the imamdar or on his tenant, but that each case should be decided on its own merits. The result had been, as far as the Government could say, that the imamdars' tenants were being deprived of their kudivaram rights, and it had become necessary to do some thing to remove by legislation this durability under which the tenants were labouring.

Mr. *K. R. Venkatarama Aiyar* observed that he could not believe that the Government had brought the measure as the result of an urge that it had felt for such social legislation.

It seemed to him that the only consideration that had prompted them to bring forward this Bill was that it had become necessary in view of conditions which had not been anticipated by the Bill of 1908. Assuming that this was a valid reason, he said, one would have thought that the legislation would have been strictly confined to the requirements of the situation. If the law as to onus of proof had come to be formulated by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in a manner not anticipated by the Act of 1908, and if it was felt that this would work injuriously to the tenants, these could be provided for by a legislation confined in its purpose to setting right these. It was obviously conceded that the present legislation went far beyond this. Whatever the presumption as to kudivaram in imam villages, it was admitted that there were and might be inam villages where both kudivaram and melvaram were owned by imamdars. In such cases, the present Bill contemplated that the Imamdars should no longer own the kudivaram, but that it should straight-away become the right of the tenant in occupation on the date of the coming into force of this legislation. No compensation was provided for his loss of the right. This was expropriation, pure and simple. He would appeal to the House to consider whether the Government had at all adduced any reason to justify "such a vandalistic piece of legislation." The number of cases involved did not matter; the only concern of the House, as present, was whether they should pass such a measure which would result in confiscation and expropriation without compensation.

Mr. *Munuswami Naidu* observed that the previous speaker had not stated anything useful to improve his case. Mr. Naidu, continuing, observed that beyond repeating the expressions "vandalistic legislation" "expropriation", as often as he could, Mr. Venkatarama Aiyar had not stated anything by way of argument. Instead, the speaker would suggest to him to make some constructive contribution to the solution of the difficulties experienced in the working of the Acts and to "try to convert them by reason and argument and not by denunciation."

Discussion closed at 5 p. m. with the speech from Mr. *T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar* who on behalf of the Opposition said they were prepared to support the motion to refer the Bill to the Select Committee. Some of them were against these amendments on the previous occasion, on the ground that sufficient time had not been given for the consideration of this question. That objection has now been met. The Opposition only wanted that there should be a fair and proper consideration in the Select Committee of the provisions of this Bill.

Mr. *Munuswami Naidu* had put the case for the Bill in a very forcible speech. With most of his observation, the speaker personally agreed. At the same time, Mr. Naidu had conceded that if imamdars would bring to the notice of the Committee any real hardships they felt they would receive due consideration. Mr. Chettiar said that one class of cases deserved special consideration, viz., such of the imam villages at the time of the grant but had since come into the hands of several persons. It would be a real hardship if these villages should be brought within the category of 'estates' within the purview of the Act.

The motion to refer the Bill to the Select Committee was put to the House and carried without a division. The House then adjourned.

#### THE MADRAS DEBTORS' PROTECTION BILL

**3rd. AUGUST :—**The Select Committee report on the 'Madras Debtors' Protection Bill (a non-official measure introduced in 1932) was subjected to a prolonged discussion in the Council to-day, when several amendments were moved and further consideration was postponed to the next non-official day.

The object of the bill is to remedy some of the evils associated with certain classes of money-lenders, especially with loans advanced by professional money-

lenders, on the security of jewels and other articles, to small borrowers, generally drawn from the middle and working classes.

A motion to delete from the Bill a clause fixing the rate of interest at 18 per cent. on unsecured loans aroused keen opposition from a section of the House and was finally carried by 64 votes against 19.

#### MADRAS IMPARTIBLE ESTATES AMEND. BILL

Discussion on Mr. *M. G. Patnaik Mahasaya's* Bill to amend the Madras Impartible Estates Act 1904 was then resumed. Discussion on this motion was postponed to the 1st February meeting to the next non-official day.

A few verbal amendments to clause two dealing with section 9 of the Act 1904 were taken up for consideration and passed. Section 9 dealt with the question of succession to an impartible estate. The following proviso was also added to the clause :—

“Provided that no decree made prior to the passing of the Madras Impartible Estates (Amendment) Act of 1934 negating the right of any person to maintenance claimed in his own right or as representing his branch shall debar his descendants declared entitled to maintenance under the provisions of the said Amendment Act from claiming such maintenance”.

The Bill was then passed into law. The purpose of this Bill was to declare the right of junior members and others of the family of the holder of impartible estates to maintenance out of the impartible estates and the income thereof without proof of any special custom.

#### HINDU RELIGIOUS ENDOWMENT AMEND. BILL

The Bill to amend the Madras Hindu Religious Endowments Act was then taken up for consideration on the motion of Mr. *R. V. Krishniah Chowdhry*.

Clause 1 gave the short title of the Bill and was adopted.

Clause 2 amended Section 44-A of the Religious Endowments Act of 1926 in regard to the alienation of service inams.

The hon. *Sir Archibald Campbell* moved the insertion of the following clause in place of the one provided in the Bill :—

“(2) (a) The Collector may, on his own motion, or on the application of the trustee of the math or temple or of the Committee or of the Board, or of any person having interest in the math or temple who has obtained the consent of such trustee, Committee or Board, by order, resume the whole or any part of any such imam on one or more of the following grounds, namely—

(i) that the holder of such imam or part has made an exchange, gift, sale or mortgage, of the same or any portion thereof, for a term exceeding five years, or

(ii) that the holder of such imam or part has failed to perform or make the necessary arrangements for performing, in accordance with the custom or usage of such math or temple, the charity or service for performing which the imam had been made, confirmed or recognised by the British Government, or any part of the said charity or service, as the case may be, or

(iii) that the math or temple has ceased to exist or the charity or service in question has in any way become impossible of performance.

When passing an order under this clause, the Collector shall determine whether such imam comprising such part, as the case may be, is a grant of both the melvaram and the kudivaram.”

Answering a question of Mr. *A. Ranganatha Mudaliar*, the hon. *Sir Archibald Campbell* said: Consequential amendments were adopted in regard to the other subsections of the section. The following were substituted on the motion of the hon. *Sir Archibald Campbell* for clauses 2 (f) and (g) of the Bill :—

“(f) Where any Imam or part of an imam is resumed under this section, the Collector or the District Collector, as the case may be, shall, by order, re-grant such imam or part—

(i) as an endowment to the math or temple concerned, or

(ii) in case of resumption on the ground that the math or temple has ceased to exist or that the charity or service in question has in any way become impossible of performance, as an endowment to the Board, for appropriation to such religious,

educational or charitable purposes not inconsistent with the objects of such math or temple, as the Board may direct."

(g) The order of re-grant made under clause (f) shall, on application be made to the Collector within the time prescribed, be executed by him in the manner prescribed",

Clause 2 as amended was passed. The preamble was also adopted with a slight verbal alteration.

*Mr. P. V. Krishniak Chowdry* then moved that the Bill be passed into law. He thanked the hon. Sir Archibald Campbell and the Law drafting department for their co-operation and assistance in the preparation and consideration of the Bill.

The Bill was then passed into law. The House then adjourned.

#### CENTRAL LAND MORTGAGE BANK

**4th. AUGUST :—**The *hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan* moved the following resolution to-day :—  
 "This Council recommends to the Government that, with reference to sub-section (1) of Section 6 of the Madras Co-operative Land Mortgage Banks Act, 1934, the Government guarantee from Provincial revenues the principal of the debentures issued by the Central Land Mortgage Bank after the passing of the above Act up to a total face value of Rs. 50 lakhs, exclusive of such debentures as the Bank may from time to time redeem, and interest on those debentures at a rate not exceeding 5 per cent per annum. Such debentures shall be issued for such periods as may be fixed at the time of issue, not exceeding in any case 25 years from that date".

The hon. P. T. Rajan in moving the resolution said that at the time of the passing of the Land Mortgage Bank Act he gave an assurance to the House regarding the question of guarantees. In accordance with that assurance he had now come before the House and was taking it into his confidence. He at that time assured the House that the Government would guarantee the principal of the debentures issued by the Central Land Mortgage Bank. Originally the period fixed was twenty years. But after careful consideration, it was decided to raise it to twenty-five years.

*Mr. P. V. Krishniak Choudhry* moved an amendment, to the effect, that the interest on the debentures should not exceed 4 per cent per annum. He stated that money was cheap now and he could not understand why the Land Mortgage Bank should fix the rate at 5 per cent.

*Mr. B. Munuswami Naidu* said that the Government should not guarantee more than what the Bank might require for its immediate purposes and if the Bank required more, Government could then extend their guarantee. Such a procedure would also give the House another opportunity of reviewing the working of the Bank. The Bank was only a private institution, and the Government in giving the guarantee should see that the management looked to the sound and proper administration of the Bank. The objective could best be secured, he said, by the Government confining their guarantee to something less than the maximum amount of issue. Further, when the Imperial Bank and other well established banks were allowing only 2 or 2 and a half per cent on long term deposits, why, he asked, should the Land Mortgage Bank be allowed "the luxury of raising debentures at 5 or 4 per cent."?

*Mr. T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar* wished the members of the House kept themselves acquainted with the actual working of the Bank and took greater interest in it than they did at present. Referring next to the criticisms made by the previous speakers, Mr. Chettiar said that it was difficult to specify what the requirements of the Bank would be or the period during which these might be raised. The number of banks was increasing and the activities of the banks were widening. It was very likely that the entire issue of Rs. 50 lakhs might be exhausted in the course of one year or eighteen months, though, he said, the average acquirement in the recent past had been about three lakhs in two months. The Bank was not, he assured the House, anxious to pay a higher rate of interest than need be paid. But, he would suggest that 4 per cent or 5 per cent would not be too high having regard to the fact that even the Government had raised loans at 3 and a half per cent. Further, it was open to the Bank to redeem debentures whenever money was available at lower rates of interest. The Directors were not apathetic or indifferent to the interests of the Government,—whatever Mr. Munuswami Naidu might have intended to convey by his remark.



Mr. *Venkatachalam Chetti* said that it should be possible for the Bank to make an estimate of their immediate requirements and if and when need was felt for anything over that sum, Government could then increase the limit. He would therefore move an amendment that the limit of Rs. 60 lakhs fixed in the motion be reduced to Rs. 30 lakhs.

The hon. Mr. *P. T. Rajan* said that it would not be advisable to reduce the limit from Rs. 50 to 20 lakhs. The Bank had issued, so far, debentures to the value of Rs. 35 lakhs at a rate of interest higher than 5 per cent and a good part of it had been redeemed and reissued at a lower rate. The present rate was only the maximum and if money could be obtained on easy terms, they might be able, perhaps, to issue the debentures at rates lower than the maximum. The Government had no desire to deny any opportunity of discussing or reviewing the working of the Bank. The report of its working would come up before the House every year and there would be ample opportunity for them to give expression to their views.

Mr. *Venkatachalam Chetty* did not press his amendment. The other amendment, that the rate of interest should not exceed 4 per cent was put to the House and declared lost. The hon. Mr. *P. T. Rajan's* motion was then passed.

#### THE CITY MUNICIPAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Madras City Municipal Act Amendment Bill introduced by the Hon. the *Rajah of Bobbili*, the Chief Minister and referred to the select committee proposed *inter alia* to widen the franchise and abolish the system of nominations as existing at present. Experts who will be nominated by the Government will be allowed only to vote and speak on special subjects for which they will be nominated. Representation of the minority communities would be secured by so adjusting the divisions in the city that the strength of the city council would be increased from 50 to 60 and the term of the councillors extending to four years. Regarding finance, provision has been made requiring Government sanction for abolishing or reducing the existing tax on property. A tax on advertisement carts and timber has been introduced. A new chapter has been added incorporating the provisions of the Calcutta City Municipal Act relating to improvement and better sanitation of slum areas. It is proposed to adopt the system of aldermen, as in Calcutta, elected from outside the council, five seats being reserved for them.

The House at this stage adjourned till the 22nd. October.

MADRAS—22nd, to 26th. OCTOBER 1934

#### CITY CIVIL COURT AMEND. BILL

22nd. OCTOBER:—In the Council to-day, the Bill to amend the City Civil Court Act was passed, also the Malabar Land Registration Bill.

The hon. *Sir K. V. Reddi* presented the report of the Select Committee on the Bill further to amend the Madras City Civil Court Act, 1892, and moved that the Bill as amended by the Select Committee be taken into consideration.

The Bill, as originally introduced, sought to enhance the jurisdiction of the City Civil Court to Rs. 10,000. But the Select Committee amended the Bill limiting the extended jurisdiction of the Court in the first instance to Rs. 5,000, though the power was reserved for the Government to raise it up to Rs. 10,000.

Mr. *Basheer Ahmed Sayeed* suggested the postponement of the consideration of the measure till the Government had obtained the opinion of the High Court on the question, having regard to the changed conditions. He said that recent circumstances revealed a fall in the number of suits on the Original Side of the High Court, and the number was not likely to increase in the near future. Moreover, the number of judges in the High Court had now been increased to fourteen and while it was in no way advantageous to the litigant public, it was not fair to proceed with a Bill which would result in extra expenditure. One or two judges would have to be appointed to the City Civil Court and certainly additional establishment, without any curtailment in the establishment of the High Court. He reiterated that it was neither just nor fair that the Government should proceed with this matter.

The hon. *Sir K. V. Reddi* said that the arguments advanced by the previous speaker had been advanced in the Select Committee and he had taken the opportunity to state there that the pecuniary jurisdiction would be fixed at Rs. 5,000 in the first instance. All that the section stated was that power would be taken



by the Government to raise it further to Rs. 10,000. He did not admit that the High Court had not sufficient work, or that it would be necessary to reduce the strength of the Original Side establishment of the High Court or that any inconvenience would be caused to litigants. He saw no point in the suggestion that they should again go into the whole question by starting fresh enquiries.

The motion that the Bill be taken into consideration was passed. The clauses and the preamble of the Bill were adopted without discussion. The Hon. *Sir K. V. Reddi* then moved that the Bill be passed into law and the motion was carried.

#### MALABAR LAND REGISTRATION BILL

The next Bill considered was the one to further amend the Malabar Land Registration Act 1895, so as to provide that any joint registration made under Section 14 of the Act shall be in force so long as the occupancy continued instead of being limited to the period of contract.

The Hon. *Sir Archibald Campbell*, moving that the Bill be taken into consideration, stated that in several instances it had been found that occupancy had continued even after contracts had expired. The present amendment would be in the interests both of the proprietors and tenants.

The motion was carried and the Bill was passed into law without any discussion.

#### BILL TO AMEND LABOUR ACT

The Hon. *Sir Archibald Campbell* then moved that the Bill to amend the Madras Compulsory Labour Act, 1858, be referred to a Select Committee.

The Bill seeks to remove certain difficulties stated to have been experienced in connection with the carrying out of measures for the prevention of damage to public works, such as, irrigation works. It makes it lawful for heads of villages to make requisitions on the inhabitants for the supply of materials necessary for stopping breaches in the embankments of tanks, rivers and canals and to seize and, if necessary, cut down such articles wherever they might be found.

The Hon. *Sir K. V. Reddi* seconded the motion, which was then passed by the House.

#### DISTRICT MUNICIPALITIES BILL

The hon. the *Raja of Bobbili* next introduced a Bill further to amend the Madras District Municipalities Act and moved that it be taken into consideration at once. In doing so, the Minister explained the objects of the Bill, clause by clause, which, he said, was intended to remove certain difficulties found in the actual working of the Act.

#### MADRAS ESTATES LAND ACT AMEND. BILL

The Hon. *Sir Archibald Campbell* presented the report of the Select Committee on the Bill further to amend the Madras Estates Land Act 1908 and to amend the Madras Estates Land (Amendment) Act of 1934; and moved that the Bill as amended by the Select Committee be taken into consideration.

In doing so, the Revenue Member said that the Select Committee had given a very careful consideration to all the representations made to it and had in consequence recast the scheme of the Bill so as to meet the points that were raised. He hoped the Bill would be acceptable now to those who criticised it in the form in which it was introduced.

Mr. *Basheer Ahmed* moved :

'That the further consideration of the Madras Estates Land (second Amendment) Bill be adjourned till after a thorough investigation and enquiry has been made by the Government in regard to inam tenures in the various districts in the presidency and the present position of the inamdars and their tenants in the inam villages in the Presidency'.

The question was put to the House and lost.

Mr. *Basheer Ahmed* then moved : That the Bill and the amendments thereto by the Select Committee be referred again to a Select Committee for fresh report after due enquiry and taking of evidence.

He urged the House to accept this 'modest motion'. The Bill that had emerged from the Select Committee was completely different from the one referred to it. There had been no publication of this Bill. It was but elementary justice that the interests affected should be allowed to consider the position.

The House then adopted the Revenue Member's motion for the consideration of the Bill. The clauses of the Bill were then taken up for consideration.

Discussion on the clauses had not concluded when the Council adjourned till the next day, the 23rd. October, when clauses 1 to 9 of the bill was discussed and amended and formed part of the bill. The consideration of the bill being over, the Council adjourned.

#### FAILURE OF CROPS IN CEDED DISTRICTS

**24th. OCTOBER :—**In the Council to-day the member from Cuddapah, Mr. K. Kotti Reddi, moved an adjournment motion to discuss an urgent matter of public importance, namely, the situation created by the failure of crops due to want of sufficient rain in almost the whole of ceded districts which necessitated taking immediate steps for relieving distress prevailing among the ryot and the labour population in those districts.

The hon. *Sir Archibald Campbell*, replying to the criticisms, said that Government were carefully watching the situation in the districts and would do all that might be necessary to meet the situation.

Referring to the works suggested by Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar, he said that they would be considered with reference to the famine relief programme, and they would see if they could not be taken on hand as such. Referring to Mr. Ranganatha Mudaliar's speech, the Revenue member said that clear instructions had been laid to the minutest detail governing programmes of famine relief works to be carried out in any area.

Continuing, he said that special reports about the local conditions had been received from the Collectors of Bellary and Anantapur. The Collectors of Cuddapah and Kurnool had not yet sent any special report. The reports received showed that rains had partially failed in some parts of the districts. The Board of Revenue had drawn their attention to the advisability of expanding works, if necessary, and asking District Boards to expand their works also and take on hand more suitable works for giving employment to labourers. The Collector of Anantapur had already started some works for expanding minor irrigation works and repairing smaller irrigation works. A sum of Rs. 12000 had already been allotted for the execution of irrigation works and the necessary temporary staff had also been sanctioned. As regards deficiency of fodder concessions for removal of fodder and grass from forests had been given.

On the whole, he said, there seem to be only scattered scarcity and not universal scarcity in these districts. There was still hope that the rains might improve in which case the situation will be relieved. The north-east monsoon had started and it was possible they might prove to be satisfactory.

"Meantime," he said, "the situation is being carefully watched. We have already asked the Member of the Board of Revenue to inspect the area and I learn that he is leaving Madras shortly for the purpose. I can assure hon. members of this House that we are watching the situation very carefully, and I hope we will be able to satisfy them by doing whatever may be necessary to meet the situation."

Mr. K. Kotti Reddi said that in view of the assurance of the Revenue Member, he did not wish to press the motion. The motion was by leave withdrawn.

#### MADRAS MATERNITY BENEFIT BILL

With a view to preventing employment of women in factories and providing payment of maternity benefit, the Council passed to-day a non-official measure entitled the Madras Maternity Bill. According to the bill no employer shall employ a woman in any factory during four weeks immediately following confinement and every woman worker in a factory, not being a seasonal factory, shall, subject to provisions of the bill, be entitled to a payment of maternity benefit at the rate of eight annas per day during her absence for a maximum period of these weeks immediately preceding and four weeks following confinement.

#### MADRAS DEBTORS' PROTECTION BILL

The Council also passed the Madras Debtors Protection Bill which is expected to benefit largely small debtors and regulate keeping of accounts by certain creditors.

## MADRAS ESTATES LAND ACT AMEND. BILL

**25th. OCTOBER :—**The hon. *Sir Archibald Campbell* moved that the Bill further to amend the Madras Estates Land Act, 1908, and to amend the Madras Estates Land (Amendment) Act, 1934, be passed into law.

He said that he would not take up the time of the House by referring to the provisions of the Bill, which had been discussed at considerable length. But he would like to express his appreciation of the care and attention with which the members of the Select Committee and the House had considered the Bill, and the representations which had been made by the sponsors of both the principal interests concerned, in order to arrive at a settlement which would be as fair as possible to both the interests. The scheme embodied in the Bill was the outcome of a very careful consideration of those various representations and it was his hope that the Bill would result in the course of three or four years in better relations prevailing between the land-holders in the whole inam villages and their tenants.

The hon. *Sir Archibald Campbell* said that the main objective of the Bill was to protect the tenants from losing their occupancy rights in inam villages. This was far different from what had been described as 'expropriation'. The Bill was necessarily a compromise between the claims of inamdars and of tenants. The compromise embodied in the Bill was on the whole a fair one, and he hoped that the measure, in its working, would prove beneficial to both inamdars and tenants.

The Bill was then passed into law.

## DISTRICT MUNICIPALITIES BILL

The discussion on the motion of Mr. *Muniswami Naidu* to refer to a Select Committee the Government Bill to amend the Madras District Municipalities Act was then resumed.

The *Honble Raja of Bobbili*, replying to the debate, said that he did realise that the statement of objects and reasons accompanying the Bill had not been clearly written. Much of the criticisms of Mr. Naidu, the experienced Parliamentarian that he was, was turned on that weak point. All his criticisms would have been avoided if the reasons for this legislation had been clearly stated. The necessity for systematising the various scales of pay, fixing the cadres, etc., of the establishment, had been felt for a long time. Experience showed there was much diversity in these matters between municipality and municipality. Sometimes the pay drawn was out of proportion to the duties or responsibilities attaching to the post. It was the intention of the Government to bring some sort of uniformity in this matter. Moreover, it was felt that it was not possible to give effect to the resolution of this House for the extension of the communal rule to the local board employees, unless there were definite cadres and definite scales of pay fixed. It was too late in the day to talk about the merits or demerits of this system. The principle had been accepted by the Government and would be found not only now but in the coming years to be as much a safeguard for Brahmins as for other communities.

Again, the clause as to transfer of officers from one municipality to another was not so revolutionary as it was thought out to be. The necessity for it had been foreseen by the framers of the Act. He would make it clear that such transfers could be confined to such higher posts as managers, accountants or secretaries, to which provincial cadres were formed. For clerks and other subordinate establishment, there would be only district cadres and in the ordinary circumstances, there would be no transfers.

This power of transfer, the *Rajah of Bobbil* went on to say, would enable the Government in suitable cases, to get the ex-Taluk Board employees absorbed in the service of local bodies. Apart from that, there was nothing either retrograde or revolutionary in the proposal, as even quite recently the District Boards had the power to transfer the servants of Taluk Boards and Panchayats from one body to another. He did not therefore understand why this power of transfer should not be taken by the Government to be exercised in the best interests of the local board employees and local boards themselves.

"Again in fixing the posts and pay, we have found that in the past some of the District Boards have not followed any principles", said the *Rajah Sahab*. "Whatever may be the opinions of some who seem to think that any measure that would interfere with local boards is going to affect the autonomy of Local Self-Government, I am prepared to say this much—that if we should ensure the future progress and

prosperity of Local Self-Government and if we are to see that these local boards function efficiently, it is necessary that the employees thereof should not be made the pawns in the game of party politics and party faction. It is of the utmost importance to the future progress of Local Self-Government in this province that they should be freed from all danger of party politics. I know many cases; I do not wish to mention the names in which even District Board Presidents and Chairmen of municipal Councils have been put to great difficulties owing to the exigencies of party politics. There were occasions when even the most honest of Presidents of Boards and Chairmen of Councils were compelled to give in. It is, therefore, I believe not in the interests of local boards but also in the interests of those directing the affairs of local boards that some sort of uniformity is brought about. At the same time, I shall make it clear, once again, that the Government, by this measure do not propose to take away the power of the local boards in respect of appointments either at present or in the future. That is not at all the intention.

The Raja of Bobbili then proceeded to explain the urgency for the measure. His single objection in trying to get the Bill passed into law at one sitting, was the interests of ex-taluk board employees who deserve to be re-employed without any avoidable delay. The urgency was all the greater because the Municipalities had not followed the instructions of the Government to prefer this class of unemployed in filling up the vacancies. The Minister, proceeding, mentioned another reason for taking power to transfer the higher grade of servants from one municipality to another. "The House is aware" he said "that aggrieved municipal or local board employees have a right to appeal to the Government. Numerous cases have come to the notice of the Government where these employees have been subjected to the victimisation". After subjecting the appeal to investigation, the Government would order the reinstatement of the appellants. But the next minute, these employees would be placed under suspension by the local body on some new charge. The Secretary of the District Board of Chingleput and the Manager of the Municipal Council, Trichinopoly, were instances in point. They have been removed three or four times in spite of the Government Order restoring them to their appointments. I do feel that in such cases, in consultation with local bodies, mutual transfers should be arranged."

In conclusion, he requested the mover of the amendment not to press it.

After some discussion, the amendment of Mr. Munisami Naidu was withdrawn, and the motion of the Raja of Bobbili to take the Bill into consideration, was accepted. The Bill was then considered clause by clause.

Clause 1 was amended on the motion of *Mr. R. Foulkes* as follows and allowed to stand part of the Bill:—"This Act may be called the Madras District Municipalities (Second Amendment) Act, 1934."

Clause 2, regarding the restoration to office of absentee Councillors, formed part of the Bill, without discussion or amendment.

Clause 3 gives power to the Government to fix the strength of the staff and scales of salaries etc. It runs;

After sub-section (2) of Section 70 of the said Act, the following sub-section shall be added, namely:—

"(3) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-sections (1) and (2) the Local Government shall have power to fix or alter the number, designations and grades of, and the salaries, fees and allowances payable to the officers and servants of any municipal council or any class of such officers and servants; and it shall not be open to the municipal council to vary the number, designations, grades, salaries, fees or allowances as so fixed or altered except with the previous sanction of the Local Government.

*Mr. Subramania Bhatt* moved an amendment to add the following proviso at the end of the clause:

"This clause shall effect only future entrants to service."

The *Rajah of Bobbili*, opposing the motion, said that the Government had already passed orders that the difference between the existing pay and the new scale of pay, should be treated as personal pay.

The amendment was lost. The clause then formed part of the Bill.

By clause 4, the Government sought to take power to frame rules in regard to representation of different communities in municipal service.

*Mr. Bhatt* moved an amendment so as to provide for consultation with and the approval of the Municipal Council.

Opposed by the Minister, the amendment was lost.



Mr. *M. S. Shrestha* moved an amendment to clause 4 which modified Section 73 so as to secure uniformity in the conditions of services of local bodies and municipalities.

Mr. *Sreshta's* amendment was to add the following proviso to the clause :—

"Provided further that all rules made under this section shall be placed on the table of the Legislative Council while it is in session and shall not come into force until they have been accepted with or without modifications by the Legislative Council."

Mr. *Sreshta* and a number of other speakers expressed the view that it was essential that the rules should be examined and approved by the House before they came into force. It was not proper, some of these speakers urged, to give a *carte blanche* to the Government, even though the Government might be well-intentioned.

The hon. the *Rajah of Bobbili* said the communal G. O. that would be applied to the higher local board provincial services would be the same as that which obtained in respect of Government departments. He did not think it was necessary that the rules to be framed should obtain the sanction of the House before being brought into force. If the amendment were passed, it would lead to great difficulties.

The amendment was eventually lost. Clause 4 became part of the Bill.

An amendment was moved by Mr. *U. C. S. Bhatt* to clause 5 urging that employees drawing salaries under Rs 100 should not be transferred from one district to another. The Chief Minister opposed it on the ground that it would make it difficult to absorb employees of taluk boards who had been discharged with the abolition of those boards. The amendment was lost.

The hon. the *Rajah of Bobbili* moved an amendment adding a proviso to Section 73-A (relating to the power of the Local Government to transfer employees of local boards and municipalities) stating that "such power shall be exercised after consulting the local bodies concerned."

The amendment was passed without much discussion. Clause 5 as amended was passed. The other clauses and preamble of the Bill were carried without any material change.

The hon. the *Rajah of Bobbili* moved that the Bill be passed into law. The motion was carried and the bill passed into Law.

#### LOCAL BOARD BILLS

The hon. the *Rajah of Bobbili* next introduced the Bill further to amend the Madras Local Boards and Elementary Education (Amendment) Act, 1924 and moved that it be taken into consideration at once.

The object of this Bill is to remove certain difficulties which are found in the actual working of the Act, the Minister stated, and are explained in the notes on clauses below circulated to members. These are as follows :

Clause 2.—Clause (h) of sub-section (1) of section 56 of the Madras Local Boards Act, 1920, provides that a member shall cease to hold office if he fails to attend the meetings of the board for the period specified therein and sub-section (4) provides for the restoration under certain circumstances, of the member who has so ceased to hold office. In the case of a member who after restoration still continues to absent himself from the meetings of the board, there is no clear provision in the Act as to the date from which his default should be counted. It is proposed to amend clause (h) of sub-section (1) of section 56 so as to provide that this date shall be the date of his restoration to office under sub-section (4).

Clause 3.—New section 70-A of the Madras Local Boards Act—There is no provision in the Act as it stands at present for the transfer of employees from one local board to another except upon the consent of the employees and of the local boards concerned. Government consider that there should be provision for the transfer of the officers and servants of local board to the service of another local board or of a municipality. It will also enable the transfer of district board servants who are surplus owing to the fixing by Government under sub-section (3) of section 67 of the Madras Local Boards Act, 1920, of the schedule of establishment of district boards and the scales of pay of the staff, to other district boards or municipalities. Such a provision will prevent the stagnation of employees in one place and the consequent loss in efficiency. The power of appointment conferred by the Act on local boards and their presidents will remain unaffected.



Clause 4—Items (i) and (ii) : Under rule 1-B (1) (i) of Schedule V to the Madras Local Boards Act, 1920, charges on preventive and remedial measures connected with epidemics are debitable only to the funds of district boards. When an epidemic breaks out in a panchayat area and preventive measures have to be taken immediately, it is highly desirable and convenient that the concerned panchayats should move in the matter at once and incur the necessary expenditure rather than leave the matter to the district board. It has also been suggested that while charges on the control of epidemics may generally be borne by district boards, panchayats be made to bear a portion of such charges. It is accordingly proposed to amend rule 1-A (1) of Schedule V to the Madras Local Boards Act, 1920, so as to make it possible for panchayats also to expenditure on remedial and preventive measures connected with epidemics.

Item (iii).—Under clause (k) of rule 1-B, the expenditure on protected water-supply in panchayat areas is a charge on district board funds. The item is not included in the list of objects on which the panchayat boards can incur expenditure under rule 1-A (1). Nor can they incur expenditure on this object under clause (n) or rule 1-A (2) as it had been specially laid down that it is a charge on district board funds. The effect of these provisions is that only district boards can incur expenditure on the provision of water-supply in panchayat areas. It has been represented that district boards can ill-afford to bear such charges. It is, therefore, proposed to omit this item of expenditure, [clause (k) from rule 1-B.

District boards can even then contribute towards expenditure on protected water-supply schemes for all important villages in the district under rule 4.

Clause 5.—Ordinary elections will be held shortly to the district boards in four districts and the newly elected members of at least three of them will come into office on the 1st November 1934. If any of these districts is split up into two or more districts soon after the 1st November 1934, the members then in office will lose their membership and fresh elections will have to be held to the new district boards. Rule 7 of the Schedule to Madras Act II of 1934 will not apply to those members, as they were not in office when that Act came into force. It seems desirable to extend the benefit of that rule to those members so that they may be in office for their full term and thereby avoid a fresh election. If, however, a district is split up at a time when the members are nearly at the end of their term there would be no objection to holding a fresh election immediately.

It is proposed to provide for both these contingencies by amending rule 7 of the Schedule to Madras Act II of 1934.

There was no amendment ; and after some ineffective opposition to clause 5, the Bill was passed into law.

#### ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT

The Bill to amend the Madras Elementary Education Act was then introduced by the hon. *Dewan Bahadur Kumarasami Reddiar*, Minister for Education.

A motion to refer the Bill to a Select Committee was then made by him. He had not concluded his speech in commending it to the acceptance of the House at 4 p. m. when the motion, for an adjournment debate for which leave was obtained earlier in the day, took precedence.

#### LAND REVENUE ASSESSMENT

On the clock striking 4, Mr. *P. V. Krishnayya Chaudhari* on being called upon by the President, moved :

“That the business of the House be adjourned to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, to wit, the attempt made in the various districts to recover land revenue suspended last year and the necessity of treating it as remission”.

Moving the adjournment motion, Mr. Choudhari urged the Government to come forward with an announcement of the remission of the suspended revenue for, at a time when, he said, measures of relief were urgently called for, it would not be wise on the part of Government to impose additional burdens either by way of enhanced water rates or collection of suspended portions of the kist.

After some other members had spoken the hon. *Sir Archibald Campbell* replying, said that Government were not making arrangements for the collection of the revenue. The question, he said, would be considered after the reports from the Board of Revenue were received, which, it was expected, would be some time next month. Orders would be passed before the next season. He assured the House, in

conclusion, that the matter raised by the adjournment motion would receive the close and careful consideration of the Government.

The mover of the adjournment motion did not press it and the motion was by leave of the House withdrawn.

His Excellency the Governor addressed the House at 5 p. m. and the speech occupied twenty minutes, at the conclusion whereof His Excellency was cheered lustily.

#### ELEMENTARY EDUCATION BILL

**26th. OCTOBER :—**The House then proceeded to consider the motion of the hon. Mr. S. Kumararami Reddiar to refer to a Select Committee the Bill amending the Elementary Education Act of 1920. The hon. Minister whose speech had suffered interruption twice, began by saying that he would continue 'the third and I hope the last instalment of my speech' (laughter). The problem which the Bill aimed at solving was one which they could not ignore. Experience had, he said, shown that little progress had been made in respect of the removal of illiteracy. Even in areas where compulsion had been adopted, the wastage was almost the same as in other areas of the presidency. On an examination of the causes for this state of things it had been found that though compulsion had been nominally introduced in many areas, no active steps had, he said, been taken with a view to enforce it. It, therefore, became necessary to consider whether it was not possible to improve the method of enforcement provided in the Act. There was, he thought, an apprehension in some quarters that the method provided in the amending Bill would prove a greater hardship than the one provided in the existing Act, but a comparison of the two methods would remove the apprehension. The procedure laid down in the present Bill, he said, was more lenient and less humiliating to offending parents. The hardship, if any, he felt sure, would not be in any degree greater than under the existing Act. The evil was of such great magnitude that they should not be half-hearted in their attempts to remove it. If the measure should succeed even partially in its objects, the achievement would surely be a creditable one for the whole House ; but if it should fail for any reason, even then they would have the satisfaction of having made an endeavour to solve the problem. He moved that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

The motion to refer the Bill to a Select Committee was accepted by the House and a Select Committee was appointed by the House to consider the Bill.

#### BILL TO AMEND CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES ACT

The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan introduced a Bill further to amend the Madras Co-operative Societies Act, 1932 and moved that it be taken into consideration.

The objects of the Bill are explained in the following note :—

Section 28 of the Co-operative Societies Act, 1932, as it stands at present, applies to the execution of decrees, decisions, awards and orders obtained by a registered society. The section does not in terms apply to the case of decrees, etc., obtained by a liquidator on the dissolution of a registered society or the recovery of the sums awarded or ordered to be paid in pursuance of Sections 41, 47 and 49. It is considered desirable to amplify the Section so as to make it applicable to these cases also. In view of the amplification proposed, it would be inappropriate to retain the section under the heading "Privileges of Registered Societies" under which it now stands. It is accordingly proposed to place the section as amplified under the heading "Miscellaneous."

The motion to refer the Bill to a Select Committee was lost.

The Bill was then taken up for consideration and the clauses were passed one by one with very slight alterations. Clause 3 of the Bill ran as follows :—

3. After Section 57 of the said Act, the following section shall be inserted namely :—"57-A. The Registrar or any person subordinate to him empowered by the Registrar in this behalf may, subject to such rules as may be prescribed by the Local Government and without prejudice to any other mode of recovery provided by or under this Act, recover—

(a) any amount due under a decree or order of a civil court, a decision or an award of the Registrar or arbitrator or an order of the Registrar, obtained by a registered society or liquidator ; or

(b) any sum awarded by way of costs under section 41 ; or

(c) any sum ordered under section 47 to be recovered as a contribution to the assets of a society or as costs of liquidation ; or

(d) any sum ordered under section 49 to be repaid to a society or recovered as a contribution to its assets together with the interest, if any, due on such amount or sum and the costs of process, by the attachment and sale of the property of the person against whom such decree, decision, award or order has been obtained or passed.

The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan moved that after the words "under section 41" the following be inserted:—

"to a registered society or to the Government." The amendment was passed.

Mr. T. A. Ramalingam Chetti moved an amendment that after the words "Registered Society" wherever it occurred the words "financing bank" be inserted.

The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan accepted the amendment which was then passed.

Clause 3 as amended and Clause 4 were then passed. Clause 4 ran as follows:—

4. In clause (ee) of sub-section (2) of section 65 of the said Act, for the word and figures "section 28," the word, figures and letter "section 57-A" shall be substituted. The preamble was then passed.

The Hon. P. T. Rajan next moved that the Bill be passed into law. The motion was carried.

#### NON-OFFICIAL BILLS INTRODUCED

The House then gave leave to Mr. Abdul Hamid Khan to introduce his *Bill to further amend the Madras Motor Vehicles Taxation Act*, Mr. M. Devadasan a *Bill to amend the Madras Village Courts Act*, Mr. Subramania Bhatt a *Bill to provide for the appointment of executive officers to the Hindu Maths*, and Mr. Basheer Ahmad Sayeed the *Madras Muslim Wakf Bill*.

The Council then adjourned *Sine die*.

## The Bombay Legislative Council

MONSOON SESSION—POONA—13th to 31st AUGUST 1934.

The Monsoon Session of the Bombay Legislative Council commenced at Patna on the 13th. August 1934 with Sir A. M. K. Dehlavi in the chair.

After question time Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto, Minister, Local Self-Government, withdrew the bill to further amend the City of Bombay Municipal Act.

#### BOMBAY COURT OF WARDS AMEND. BILL

The Revenue Member introduced a bill to amend the Bombay Court of Wards Act with a view to giving the court of wards power to issue certificates to civil courts requiring the release of the property of Government to such extent and period as was necessary in the interests of estate to meet the emergency of entire funds attached in the execution of a civil decree. The Bill was passed.

#### MUNICIPAL & LOCAL BOARDS ACT AMEND. BILL

14th. AUGUST :—The bill introduced by the Minister of Local Self-Government to further amend the Bombay District, Municipal, Local Boards and Burroughs Act was passed into law.

#### TRADE DISPUTES CONCILIATION BILL

The Home Member introduced a bill to make further provision for settlement of trade disputes by conciliation. The bill aims to establish a regular system of conciliation of disputes between millhands and employers with the object of preventing and reducing strikes in future by appointing a labour office to safeguard the interests of labour with a commissioner of labour as the chief conciliator with power to appoint suitable special assistant conciliators. It will be the duty of the conciliator to give notice to parties to a dispute to appoint delegates and report the result to the Government.

Mr. *R. R. Bakhale* in a lengthy speech opposed the bill in principle on the constitution of the conciliatory machinery.

The House adjourned at this stage.

**16th. AUGUST :—**After two days' discussion, the Bill to make further provisions for the settlement of trades disputes by conciliation was read for the first time in the Council. All non-official amendments were lost.

The *Home Member*, replying to the criticisms to the amendments, pointed out that the Bill aimed at excluding extremists and communists from delegation of workers. The Bill would further foster the true spirit of trade unionism among textile workers. Referring to the amendment to limit the life of the Bill to three years the *Home Member* said that the Bill would not produce any immediate good effects and further provision could be made later by amending the Bills.

#### LOCAL BOARDS ACT AMEND. BILL

The House adjourned till the next day after passing the Bills relating to amendments to the Local Boards Act.

#### PREVENTION OF GAMBLING BILL

**17th. AUGUST :—**Non-official Bills came up for consideration in the Council to-day.

Mr. *L. R. Gokhale's* Bill to amend the Bombay Prevention of Gambling Act fell through, at the second reading, when his motion to refer back the Bill to the Select Committee was rejected by the House.

Mr. Gokhale held that the report of the Select Committee went beyond the scope of the Bill as accepted by the House during the first reading by legalising gambling by persons who bought admission tickets to the race course.

#### BOMBAY DEVADASI BILL

Mr. *R. D. Bole's* Devadasi Bill was read for the second and third times and passed into law.

Replying to Mr. *Syed Munnawar*, *Dewan Bahadur S. T. Kambli*, Minister for Education, stated that the Government were aware that in some provinces, State-aid Industries Act was in operation, but the Government of Bombay did not intend introducing a similar legislation in the near future. The Government, the Minister added, were, however, considering a scheme of giving loan with a view to fostering small industries.

#### PREVENTION OF ADULTERATION BILL

**18th. AUGUST :—**The first reading of the Bill to amend the Prevention of Adulteration Act of 1925, was moved by Mr. *A. N. Surve* in the Council to-day.

On a statement by Sir *Shah Nawaz Khan Bhutto*, Minister for Local-Self-Government, that he proposed to introduce a comprehensive amending Bill during the next session, Mr. Surve withdrew his Bill.

#### MONEY-LENDING REGULATION BILL

Mr. *Syed Munnawar's* Bill to regulate the money-lending business was read for the first time and it was decided to circulate the Bill for the purpose of eliciting public opinion within three months.

#### LAW OF ADOPTION AMEND. BILL

**20th. AUGUST :—**The Council devoted the whole day in the discussion of Mr. *H. B. Desai's* bill to amend the law of adoption in the presidency in view of the decision of the Privy Council which upset a long established practice sanctioned by the law and usage. The bill seeks to restore the position obtaining before the Privy Council decision, i. e. that no Hindu widow who has not an estate vested in her and whose husband was not separated at the time of his death, shall be deemed competent to adopt a son without his authority or consent of coparceners.

#### TRADE DISPUTE CONCILIATION BILL

**22nd. AUGUST :—**The second reading of the Trades Dispute Conciliation Bill was not passed even to-day. Minor amendments were made in certain clauses of

the Bill but the Home Member pointed out that the Government would oppose Mr. *Bakhale*, if he moved amendments contrary to the principle of the Bill. Accordingly most of Mr. *Bakhale*'s amendments were lost.

Retrenchment in the expenditure on the household of the Governor of Bombay, formed the subject of a question by *Rao Saheb P. D. Kulkarni* to-day.

Replying, *Khan Bahadur B.D. Cooper*, Revenue and Finance Minister, stated that retrenchment in the Governor's household expenditure was executed to the extent of Rs. 1,49,000.

**23rd. AUGUST :—**The second reading of the Trades Disputes Conciliation Bill was not passed even to-day, though several amendments moved by Mr. *Bakhale* were lost.

Mr. *Bakhle* refused to move an amendment, to the clause in the Bill which awards 2 years' imprisonment and fine of Rs. 5000 for molesting, inciting or intimidating persons from conciliation proceedings. The *President* thereupon requested the House to consider the question and inform the Home Member of their views on Monday next.

**27th. AUGUST :—**The Trades Disputes Conciliation Bill passed the second reading with minor amendments in the Council today, but when the *Home Member* moved the third reading, Mr. *Bakhle* raised a strong protest.

In Mr. *Bakhle*'s opinion conciliation proceedings under this Act would be ineffective owing to its permissive character and workers would always choose conciliation proceedings under the Trades Dispute Act instead of this Act.

The Bill was then read for the third time and passed into law, only eight voting against it.

The *Home Member* announced that the Government would agree to the term of imprisonment of six months instead of 2 years and no fine instead of Rs. 2,000, as provided in the Bill.

#### BOMBAY OPIUM BILL

**28th. AUGUST :—**In the Council to-day, Government were able to get only the Opium Bill passed.

#### PREVENTION OF GAMBLING BILL

The Bill further to amend the Bombay Prevention of Gambling Act, 1887, met with much opposition. It was only on the *President's* ruling regarding applying closure, that the first reading of the Bill was passed by 45 votes to 13. *Sind* members voted with the Government.

**29th. AUGUST :—**The Council passed to-day the Bill to further amend the Bombay Prevention of Gambling Act of 1887, without a division.

Most of the demands for supplementary grants were passed without much opposition but the demand for loans to small industries, moved by Hon. Mr. *Cooper* raised considerable discussion, most members favouring reduction of interest rate to 3 to 4 and a half per cent from three and one third per cent.

Mr. *Cooper* did not accept the proposal and the grant was made.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS

**31st. AUGUST :—**Supplementary demands were made on behalf of the Government, by the *Home Member*, to-day, for the establishment charges in connection with the opening of the Honorary Presidency Magistrates' Courts to try municipal cases in the Bombay City, as an experimental measure.

The Council then adjourned.



# The U. P. Legislative Council

WINTER SESSION—LUCKNOW—29th. OCTOBER to 17th. DECEMBER 1934

The Winter Session of the United Provinces Legislative Council commenced at Lucknow on the 29th. October 1934 with *Sir Sitaram* in the chair. Both official and non-official attendance was good.

## U. P. VILLAGE PANCHAYAT AMEND. BILL

The Council passed without discussion the bill to amend the United Provinces Village Panchayat Act, 1920, aiming at transference of general sanitation of villages from District Magistrates to the District Boards.

## BUNDELKHAND LAND ALIENATION AMEND. BILL

In the absence of the Finance Member, the Home Member, *Mr. Kunwar Jagdish Prasad* introduced the Bundelkhand Land Alienation Act Amendment Bill. *Mr. C. Y. Chintamani*, leader of the Opposition, opposed consideration of the Bill during the present session. The Bill was postponed. The Council then adjourned until October 31.

## U. P. USURIOUS LOANS AMEND. BILL

**31st. OCTOBER :—**The Council devoted the whole day to discussion of the Usurious Loans (United Provinces) Amendment Bill and a dozen of twenty amendments given notice of thereto.

Moving for the consideration of the Bill, the Finance Member, *Sir Edward Blunt* emphasised that the object of the Bill was to suppress usury and penalise creditors for charging usurious rates of interest and thus give a certain amount of relief to the debtors. Strictly speaking, the impression that the Bill was in some way or other a measure to provide relief especially to the agricultural debtor was erroneous. The main non-official criticism against the Bill was that it sought to amend an Act passed by the Central Legislature and aimed at remedying a state of affairs not peculiar only to this province. It was pointed out that piece-meal legislation in individual provinces for suppression of usury would not meet the end in view, the proper course being to see the Usurious Loans Act amended by the Central Legislature which was responsible for it.

**1st. NOVEMBER :—***Khan Bahadur Fasihuddin* moved an amendment to-day seeking incorporation of the Rule of Damdupat (which lays down that interest should, in no case, exceed the principal in usurious loans) in the Usurious Loans Bill. The amendment was defeated by 48 votes against 40.

Just before division was challenged the Finance Member, *Sir Edward Blunt* wanted the House that the Government would not proceed with the Bill, if the amendment was carried.

The Finance Member moved an amendment to Clause VI of the Bill to the effect that in case of secured loans, the Court shall deem interest excessive, if the rate exceeded 12 per cent and if the period between rests (the end of specified periods, when interest has to be calculated and added to the principal) was less than six months, provided also that in the case of secured loans, the Court shall not deem interest excessive if the rate had not exceeded seven per cent unless the period between rests was less than six months.

As notice of a series of amendments not included in the Order paper for the day, to the Finance Member's amendment was given by some members, the President adjourned the House earlier, in order to enable members to understand the amendments properly and participate in the debate more intelligently next day.

**2nd. NOVEMBER :—**The Council spent the whole day discussing amendments to Clause VI of the Usurious Loans Bill.

The clause as drafted by the Select Committee embodies rates of interest which should be regarded as usurious in respect of secured and unsecured loans and which vary with the amount lent. Official amendments are opposed to the provision of the varying rates of interest and any rate of interest for unsecured loans should not be left out of account.

The main amendment on behalf of the Government by Mr. R. F. Mudie lays down that interest exceeding 12 per cent on immovable property should be regarded as usurious in the case of a first mortgage and provides for six monthly rests. It further provides that a court shall not deem interest excessive if the rate does not exceed 7 per cent annually.

Just before the House rose for the day, a non-official amendment suggesting a via media between the official and the non-official points of view was moved.

**3rd. NOVEMBER :—**Discussing the Usurious Bill to-day, the Council could not get through the second reading on account of a last minute hitch which occurred owing to doubts arising as to the applicability of the Bill to past transactions, in the absence of any specific provision therein.

The House rejected Mr. Radhe Shyam Rastogi's (representing the bankers and money-lenders) amendment to the effect that the Act shall not apply to loans made before the commencement of this Act.

After passing without discussion the *Bundelkhand Land Alienation Amendment Bill*, the Council adjourned until November 15.

**15th. NOVEMBER :—**The Council passed to-day the Usurious Loans (United Provinces) Amendment Bill, after the official amendment, designed to dispel doubt given rise to by the ruling of a certain court regarding the applicability of the Bill to past transactions, had been incorporated.

#### U. P. ENCUMBERED ESTATES BILL

The Finance Member, *Sir Edward Blunt* moved for consideration of the United Provinces Encumbered Estates Bill, the most contentious of all debt legislation Bills. The Bill is intended to assist the landowners whose assets, if relief is given, are sufficient to discharge indebtedness. The Bill applies only to larger landlords whose land revenue exceeds Rs. 100.

A measure of sharpness of the differences of opinion on the provisions of the Bill as it emerged from the Select Committee was furnished by the fact that no less than 148 amendments to it figured on the agenda paper.

*Mr. C. Y. Chintamani* raised an important point of order inviting the Chair's ruling whether the Select Committee was competent to take as basis of discussion a Bill which had never been introduced in the Council and which had never been referred to it (although the subject matter was the same) and consider the Bill referred to it and proceed with amendments to it.

*Sir Sitaram*, President, wanted to know from the Finance Member whether the amended draft was merely an amended draft or was based on certain new principles which were not before the House when the original Bill was introduced.

The *President* observed: "This is clearly a very interesting point and I think a point which does not seem to have occurred, at least in the history of this Council. In Mayne's 'Parliamentary Practice', there is reference to certain cases in which numerous motions have been made by the Select Committee. The Speaker of the House of Commons advised the Government to bring up a new Bill because it was an absolutely different Bill from the one introduced in Parliament. The Chair is not in a position to give that advice to the Government as regards this Bill, simply for the reason that this matter has been hanging for a long time and perhaps it would be advisable to grapple with the problem once for all. I must, however, say that it is against all parliamentary practice to introduce another Bill in the Select Committee, a Bill different from the one that was introduced in the House. It would be creating a bad precedent if a new draft Bill, based on new principles, were to be put before the Select Committee after it had been seen by the House."

*Mr. Mohanlal Sah* (representing Bankers) moved for recirculation of the Bill to elicit further public opinion as the Bill was of a highly complicated nature and the problem it sought to solve of far-reaching importance. The House rose for the day at this stage.

**16th. NOVEMBER :—**The Council, after devoting the whole of the forenoon to-day to the *Finance Member's* motion to take into consideration the Encumbered Estates Bill, entered on the second reading stage of the Bill, having thrown out Mr. *Mohanlal Sah's* (bankers' representative) amendment to the effect that the Bill be circulated for eliciting opinion. The House disposed of eleven minor amendments in the course of the second reading before it adjourned until November 19.

**19th. NOVEMBER :—**The first division in connection with the consideration of the Encumbered Estates Bill took place in the Council to-day when the alliance between the Government and those advocating the interests of the creditors was found ineffective against the combined strength of others championing the cause of the debtors and an amendment by Babu *Radhey Shyam Rastogi*, which secured the *Finance Member's* support, failed to find favour with the House. The House voted for the retention of the original clause permitting 'any person actually managing' a landlord's property to apply on his behalf, by 45 against 32 votes and the amendment for the deletion of those words fell through. Slow but steady progress was being made with the bill and 38 out of 148 amendments had been disposed of when the Council adjourned at 5 p. m.

Great amusement was caused when during the division Minister Sir *Mahomed Yusuf*, the Education and Finance Secretaries, the director of publicity, the deputy legal remembrancer and certain other officials walked into the wrong lobby and soon ran across the House into the noes lobby when they realised their mistake in time. This was apparently due to confusion in their minds as regards the motion on which they were casting their votes.

**20th. NOVEMBER :—**With a compromise in sight between the Government and the Zemindars on the latter's amendment to the Encumbered Estates Bill as the result of the *Finance Member's* assurance that the principle of the amendment would be embodied in a separate clause, a division was challenged by the Opposition in the Council to-day, the Government suffering a reverse by a very narrow margin.

The amendment laid down that the heirs of a deceased debtor, who were not members of a joint family, should give all particulars of the property inherited by them when seeking relief under this Act. The amendment was carried by 39 votes against 38. The Government successfully resisted other non-official amendments.

The House before it adjourned until November 26 finished all amendments to Clauses 4 to 11 of the Bill, including a non-official amendment exempting debts due to Co-operative Societies, from the operation of Clause XI of the Bill.

**26th, NOVEMBER :—**Discussion on the clause relating to the principle of "Damdupat" which is one of the most important clauses in the Encumbered Estates Bill started in the Council when it reassembled this morning.

The Rule lays down that interest shall in no case exceed the principal.

An important amendment to this clause was moved by the *Finance Member* to the effect that amount of interest held on the due date of application shall not exceed the total amount due on December 31, 1916.

About a dozen non-official amendments widely differing from the *Finance Member's* amendment, appeared on the agenda paper including one by *Thakur Balwant Singh* relating to scheduled rates of interest for secured and unsecured loans ranging from the amount borrowed and another by Mr. *Radheysiam Rastogi* (representing bankers) making the percent of reduction dependent on the rate of interest charged.

Moving his amendment the *Finance Member* said that the Government could not agree to any proposal which would have the effect of reducing the principal and any charge to that would have the effect of taking past payments of interest into calculation of "Damdupat."

**27th. NOVEMBER :—**The Council was still discussing amendments to Clause 12 of the Encumbered Estates Bill, embodying the principle of "Damdupat" when it rose for the day.

Mr. *R. F. Mudie*, nominated member, desired to do away with the basic date for calculation of interest proposed in the *Finance Member's* amendment and supported merely laying down that interest held due on the date of application shall not exceed that portion of the principal, which might still be due on that date (of application). Mr. *Mudie's* amendment was strongly opposed by representatives of Zamindars on the ground that few debtors would get adequate relief.

**28th. NOVEMBER :—***Thakur Balwant Singh Gahlot's* amendment, to the Damdupat Clause, the most vital one in the Encumbered Estates Bill, was negatived by 54 votes to 51, the bankers' representatives siding with the Government in throwing out the motion. The amendment proposed scheduled rates of interest for secured and unsecured loans, varying with the amount borrowed.

Feverish activity on the part of official and non-official whips was discernible, for canvassing support for the respective sides. When a division was challenged by the Opposition, the Government made it clear that the adoption of Mr. *Gahlot's* amendment would mean the rejection of the Bill, as in that case it would not be possible for them to proceed further with the Bill.

After a series of other non-official amendments had been rejected, the *Finance Member's* amendment as amended by that of Mr. *Mudie* was carried without division.

The clause as finally amended reads thus:—"The amount of interest held to be due on the date of application shall not exceed that portion of the principal as may still be found due on the date of application and a special judge shall treat as principal any accumulated interest which had been converted into principal before December 31, 1916."

**29th. NOVEMBER :—**A piquant situation arose in the Council to-day as a result of a technical difficulty which was discovered when discussion by a non-official amendment to Clause 12 on the Encumbered Estates Bill, proposing application of the Agriculturists Relief application to debts contracted after 1930, when the slum set in, was proceeding.

The President Sir *Sitaram* pointed the anomaly arising out of the application of two sets of rates contained in the Usurious Loans Act and the Agriculturists Relief Bill, which were mutually contradictory and which would be made applicable if the amendment was carried. The difficulty was surmounted by the Government making a compromise with the mover, by expecting a debtor to take advantage of both the Agriculturists Relief Bill and the Encumbered Estates Bill.

The House was still discussing the amendment to the same clause, when the House rose for the day.

**30th. NOVEMBER :—**The Council made further progress to-day with amendments to Clause 12-O to the classification of debts according to their priority.

Zamindar members succeeded in getting the sub-clause laying down that public debts due to the Government should have priority over other classes of debt deleted.

A non-official amendment proposing that philanthropic debts, bearing no interest, should have priority over other loans, in the same class bearing interest, was rejected without a division.

Towards the close of the day, a division occurred on another non-official amendment, which aimed at enabling a debtor to back out of the whole transaction even after a decree had been passed against him. The amendment was negatived by 14 votes to 28.

**1st. DECEMBER :—**The Council was confronted with an unprecedented situation this morning when the Finance Member, Sir *Edward Blunt* moved for deletion of Clause 29 (d) of the Encumbered Estates Bill, regarding the time limit for application for squashing proceedings under this Bill before a Collector, at the instance of a similar amendment carried yesterday.

A Zemindar member opposed deletion, whereupon Mr. *R. F. Mudie* (nominated official) rose to a point of order contending that as it was a consequential amendment, it could not be opposed.

This contention was upheld by the President who put the amendment to vote and declared it carried, whereupon the Zemindar member challenged a division.

The *Finance* and *Home Members* pointed out that if the House voted against the amendment, it would be going against the decision reached yesterday. They requested the President to afford them an opportunity to explain their case to the House.

Opposition was taken to any discussion being allowed after the ringing of the division bell. The President, at this stage, adjourned the House for lunch.

When the House reassembled after lunch, the Government withdrew their request for further discussion. On the motion being allowed the House agreed to the deletion of the Clause without division.



Unusually rapid progress was made with the Bill—the House disposing of 23 amendments in to-day's sitting which revived hopes of the third stage being reached early next week. There was a tame division on a non-official amendment regarding the sale of landed properties by the Collector in liquidation of a debt, which was negatived by 39 votes to 12. The House then adjourned till the 3rd.

**3rd. DECEMBER :—**After discussion lasting 11 days, the Council passed this afternoon the second reading of the Encumbered Estates Bill, disposing of no less than 25 amendments at to-day's sitting.

The Finance Member, Sir *Edward Blunt* announced that the Government did not propose to embark on the final stages of the Bill before carefully scrutinising it as amended in the course of an intermediary stage in order to see what consequential amendments had been rendered necessary and with a view to obviating the possibility of its being returned for reconsideration due to such errors as might have crept into it through oversight or inadvertence.

A couple of divisions occurred to-day, both resulting in favour of the Government.

#### TEMPORARY REGULATIONS OF EXECUTION BILL

**4th. DECEMBER :—**The third measure in the scheme of Government legislation for relief of indebtedness came up for second reading before the Council to-day. The Bill makes a temporary provision for regulation of execution of civil court decrees for debts of small agriculturists passed before the commencement of this Act and seeks to benefit cultivators including petty landlords paying less than Rs. 10. The motion for second reading evoked a somewhat animated debate in the course of which the Bill was characterised by Mr. *Gavin Jones* as a crude legislation and a mere eyewash. There were no less than three divisions in the course of the day in the first of which the Government sustained a thumping defeat for which they had to thank themselves. The division was over the amendment moved by *Khan Bahadur Maulvi Fasihuddin* seeking to remove restrictions contained in clause 4 that the Act shall not apply to any decree passed with respect to a loan taken after Dec. 31, 1931. Having opposed the amendment the Government failed to challenge a division when the amendment was put to the House and declared carried by the President.

#### THE GOVERNOR'S FAREWELL SPEECH

H. E. Sir *Malcolm Hailey*, Governor of the United Provinces, then reviewed the course of events in the province during his tenure of office, in his farewell address to the members of the Council.

Alluding to the question of finances, he thought the mischief of the Meston Award lay less in the inadequacy of its provisions than in its psychological effect, as the prospect of remission of contributions created expectations, which induced lack of caution in making recurring commitments. The Province recognized this somewhat late and upto 1926-27 there was a cumulative series of deficits. They were even more hard hit by the slump in 1930. They ought to be able on the present figures to look forward in the current year to only a small deficit in their revenue account. His Excellency added: "Believe me, it is a dispiriting task to carry on the administration for a year with the dead hand of parsimony. Chance of recovery in land revenue receipts from substantial revival of prices still seems to be far off. Unless, therefore, we can secure vigour for our attenuated body by transfusion of new blood from those sources to which the White Paper refers—imposition of excises or division of income-tax—Ministers in the new constitution will, I fear, be in a worse position than their predecessors of 1919".

Referring to the effect of the slump on the rent revenue question, His Excellency reminded members of the very genuine difficulties of tenants and their effect on their relations with landlords. He asked them to visualize the danger of a conflagration from combinations of those difficulties and the use made thereof for political motives. If anywhere there had been difficulty in collecting rents he said it had been due less to recalcitrance than genuine economic difficulties. The Government had spent much effect in endeavouring to find some systematised and self-adjusting method for meeting changes in prices. Adjustment of rent to changes in prices could in future be effected only by a tribunal or land commission.

As regards the debt legislation now before the Council, His Excellency pointed out that difficulty had been three-fold. First, they were dealing with debts of a special nature. In many other countries the State had undertaken legislation under



economic compulsion, but here there was no parallel compulsion of an economic nature. Depression greatly reduced assets and added heavily to the burdens of the agricultural debtor but the fact remained that a large mass of debt was incurred long before the depression. Measures of relief could not be adequately determined on *a priori* grounds on universal formula. They had to be checked by reference to actual details of debt and these did not exist in public documents. Thirdly, the process of legislation involved bringing into the discussion persons whose private interests were immediately affected.

Referring to the very serious lag in the development of the rural population, His Excellency pointed out that the development of the Province had been unequal, which was largely attributable to the reaction to political conditions. Disclaiming any desire to pit rural interests against urban ones, Sir Malcolm Hailey emphasised that the Province cannot make effective progress until conditions of life had been improved in the rural areas. He was convinced that opportunities in the new constitution would not only be largely wasted but might actually become a danger if some of the present rural conditions remained unamended.

Alluding to the coming change in the Indian Constitution, His Excellency said that much of public attention had been concentrated on the broadening of the franchise and increase in the powers of the legislature. Two facts, he hoped, would be appreciated in this connection. The first was that the legislature could never be successful unless the various substantial interests in the Province were properly represented in it. Secondly, the legislature even under the fullest developed form of responsible Government was only a means to an end—the creation of an administration, responsible to public opinion. But the administration must be strong and authoritative. It could be neither, if it was composed of shifting Ministries or hampered in details of administration by the legislature.

#### TEMPORARY REGULATION OF EXECUTION BILL

**5th. DECEMBER :—**The Council passed the second reading of Temporary Regulation of Execution Bill shortly after lunch time, but deferred consideration of its final stage until after the third reading of the Encumbered Estates Bill, as the Government wanted time to make verbal and consequential amendments to the Bill.

#### U. P. REGULATION OF SALES BILL

The House then took up for consideration on the Finance Member's motion yet another debt legislation bill, namely, the U. P. Regulation of Sales Bill.

The Bill seeks to ensure that the creditor, if he enforces the execution of a decree by sale of land during the period of low prices, shall not get more land in satisfaction of his loan than he could have expected to get if there had been no slump in prices. The Bill was intended to be only a temporary measure and would remain in force only so long as the slump lasts.

Protagonists of banking and money-lending interests opposed the motion for consideration of the Bill on the ground that it was absolutely superfluous in view of the fact that the Encumbered Estates Bill had already made enough concessions to the indebted Zemindars.

The House adopted the Finance Member's motion and then proceeded to consider the Bill, clause by clause, after which it adjourned till the 7th.

**7th. DECEMBER :—**When the Council resumed further consideration of the Regulation of Sales Bill there was an animated and full dress debate on clause 10, under which the local Government sought to obtain a blank cheque as regards the extension of the duration of the provisions of this Act at their sweet will and pleasure. Mr. *Gavin Jones* moved a very reasonable and modest amendment limiting the period of such extension to six months. The order paper contained two other amendments by Mr. *Radhey Shyam Rastogi* and Sir *Edward Blunt*, Finance Member, for the deletion of this clause altogether. At an early stage of the debate the House received an indication that the Government amendment was not going to be moved.

The leader of the Opposition, Mr. *Chintamani*, thereupon moved another amendment, that in case the Act was sought to be extended beyond six months the local Government should obtain the consent of the legislature. Mr. Chintamani pointed out that if the clause remained as it was, executive legislation would be substituted for legislation by the council, and he urged that this tendency, which

was highly objectionable, must be checked. He most properly castigated the Government for their change of mind and their refusal to move the amendment of which they had given due notice.

Two zemindar members, viz. *Thakur Muneshwar Singh* and *Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan*, while opposing the amendments too, rather took optimistic view of provincial autonomy under the coming constitutional changes and pictured the utter impossibility of responsible Ministers going against the wishes of the House in the matter of extending the Act.

Mr. *Gavin Jones*, replying to the debate, expressed his most complete agreement with Mr. *Chintamani* that they could not depend upon the Government's discretion in view of the exhibition which the Government had given of their vacillating and wobbling attitude during the progress of this legislation. He opined that the Government thoroughly deserved Mr. *Chintamani's* castigation and charged the Government with not knowing their mind.

There were interesting passages-at-arms between Mr. *Gavin Jones* and Sir *Edward Blunt* when the latter, in winding up, indignantly repudiated the suggestion that the Government were guilty of concessions and compromises in connection with this legislation and strongly denied that there was any vacillation and wobbling on the side of the Government.

Both the amendments having been rejected, the second reading of the Bill was concluded without any further incident.

#### ENCUMBERED ESTATES BILL

After disposing of verbal and consequential amendments to the Encumbered Estates Bill, the House took up its third reading on the Finance Member's motion. The debate on the third reading was proceeding when the Council was adjourned.

**8th. DECEMBER :—**While the common note running through the speeches of representatives of commercial and money-lending interests, who were at one in opposing the passage of the Bill, was that the measure was highly inimical to the interests of the creditors, one of them even suggesting that the Government had been actuated by political rather than economic considerations in introducing this legislation, the general feeling among the Zemindar members was that it would not afford adequate relief to the indebted people.

The Finance Member, Sir *Edward Blunt* categorically denied the suggestion that the Bill was based on political considerations, asserting that it was not meant for the benefit of the indebted classes but of the indebted masses.

The House passed the third reading and then adjourned.

#### U. P. REGULATION OF SALES BILL

**10th. DECEMBER :—**The Council this afternoon passed the third reading of the Temporary Regulation of Execution and Regulation of Sales Bills with one dissentient voice. In the course of the debate on the first Bill it was alleged by a Zemindar member that the hostile attitude of Mr. *C. Y. Chintamani*, leader of the Opposition, towards the debt legislation measures was determined by influence which representatives of money-lenders brought to bear on him.

This accusation evoked a categorical disclaimer from Mr. *Chintamani* who declared that on every occasion he went into the lobby in accordance with the dictates of his conscience and not any outside influence. Zemindar members reiterated the opinion that the measures would not effectively help millions of indebted agriculturists in lightening their burden of debt. On the other hand, the spokesman of the money-lenders felt that Government did injustice to creditors in their zeal to help big landlords out of their present financial difficulties.

*Kunwar Jagdish Prasad* defending the Government gave illustrations to demonstrate how the Bill would touch over 85 per cent of agricultural population consisting exclusively of small tenants. He enumerated the measures taken by the Government since the slump set in to help the poor tenants.

#### U. P. AGRICULTURISTS' RELIEF BILL

**11th. DECEMBER :—**The Council this afternoon finished reconsideration of the United Provinces Agriculturists Relief Bill in the light of the recommendations of His Excellency the Governor, nearly all of which were accepted by the House,

It might be recalled that the Bill was passed by the Council on December 19, 1933, but was returned by His Excellency in April last for reconsideration.

The motion of *Mr. Gavin Jones* (representing the Upper India Chamber of Commerce) for deletion of Clause 30 of the Bill providing for reduced rates of interest during the slump period on undecreed loans taken before the slump commenced was productive of a full dress debate, in the course of which, angry denunciations of the Government for their alleged 'paternal' care for zemindars were made by protagonists of the Banking and commercial interests, which evoked equally indignant denials from the Government spokesmen that they were not biased in favour of zemindars or any other particular section of the House.

*Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan*, Deputy President, speaking on behalf of the zemindars, declared that they never tried to exert unwholesome influence on the Government nor did they carry on secret negotiations with them for getting undue concessions.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS

**12th. DECEMBER :—**Supplementary grants aggregating to about nine lakhs of rupees were voted by the Council to-day.

*Mr. C. Y. Chintamani*, Leader of the Opposition, through a cut motion, raised an interesting debate on the appointment of the Reforms Officer. *Mr. C. W. Gwynne*, formerly Joint Secretary, Home Department, Government of India (and the establishment of his office). *Mr. Chintamani's* main criticism was that the appointment was too premature, as on the last occasion when constitutional Reforms were introduced it was after the passage of the Government of India Act of 1919 in Parliament that a Reforms Officer was appointed in the Province. He also wanted to know why a capable Indian junior officer was not appointed as in that case the necessity of paying overseas allowance would have been obviated.

The Finance Member, *Sir Edward Blunt*, pointed out that the choice had fallen on *Mr. Gwynne*, because of his experience of Reforms work in connection with the Provincial Franchise Committee. Another reason was that a suitable junior Indian Officer was not available.

#### U. P. NATIONAL PARKS BILL

The House, on the motion of the Home Member, *Kunwar Jagdish Prasad* referred to the Select Committee the U. P. National Parks Bill which aimed at the establishment of sanctuaries for propagation and preservation of wild life.

#### NON-OFFICIAL BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

**13th. DECEMBER :—**Non-official bills and resolutions relating to local bodies loomed large on the agenda of the Council to-day. The House passed three Bills, one amending the District Boards Act, 1922, providing for finance committees being set up for forming budgets and another amending the Municipalities Act, 1916 providing for election of committees by District Municipal Boards by means of the single transferable vote, with a view to securing adequate representation of minorities.

Another non-official resolution sought to empower the District Boards to levy tax on motor and other vehicles plying for hire on Boards' roads.

*Sir Mahomed Yusuf*, Minister for Local Self-Government, said that the Government preferred a provincial tax in order to meet the needs of District Boards and compensate municipalities which would be deprived of powers of such taxation and save the motor industry from ruin. If all District Boards were given this power of taxation, a single vehicle would be liable to be taxed by three or four District Boards.

The resolution was withdrawn on the Minister's assurance that the District Boards would get liberal grants to improve the condition of their roads.

#### THE JOINT COMMITTEE REPORT DEBATE

**14th. DECEMBER :—**On the motion of the Finance Member, *Sir Edward Blunt*, the Council this morning took up for consideration the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report. Two out of the six members who participated in the debate accorded general support to the recommendations of the Committee, while the rest criticised the Report.

Criticism was directed in the main against the Governor's special powers and safeguards. While one of the supporters of the constitutional scheme vigorously defended the safeguards, there was practical unanimity of opinion among other speakers that the Governor's powers, with reference to the Services recruited by the Secretary of State, would make them entirely independent of the Ministers and might thus obstruct the smooth working of the departments concerned.

The absence of any reference to Dominion Status as the ultimate goal of India's political aspirations was greatly deplored. One speaker asserted that the Congress policy of non-co-operation and civil disobedience was one of the factors which stood in the way of India getting more liberal Reforms.

*Rai Bahadur Vikramjitsingh*, Leader of the Constitutional Party, who initiated the discussion, thought that the Congress had not acted rightly in rejecting the Report and asked the members of the House not to accept its lead in the matter. He did not agree with those who said that the J. P. C. recommendations did not mark any advance on the present position. He felt that Parliament could still materially improve the Report and remove its objectionable features. Having regard to the present conditions, he did not object to having an Upper House nor did he find any serious objection to indirect election to the Federal Legislature. He felt optimistic about India's getting full responsible Government within the next decade provided the coming Reforms were properly worked.

*Thakur Balwant Singh Gahlot* declared that every page of the Report betrayed distrust of Indians to manage their own affairs. Provincial Autonomy in the form they were going to get was more nominal than real as Ministers would not be armed with effective powers in relation to the services recruited by the Secretary of State, while the Governor would be invested with autocratic powers to discharge his special responsibilities.

**15th. DECEMBER :—**The Council resumed consideration of the J. P. C. Report when it reassembled this morning. The general trend of the speeches was much more condemnatory of the recommendations than those of yesterday.

The Home Member, *Kunwar Jagadish Prasad*, vigorously defended the authors of the Report, deprecating the use of strong and unbalanced language and appealing for restrained criticism. He did not agree with those who said that the provincial autonomy recommended by the Committee was but thinly veiled autoeracy. Could extension of the franchise, and transfer of entire provincial administration in the hands of the Ministers responsible to Legislature wiping out the official block, he asked, be lightly dismissed? He admitted that there were safeguards but every constitution had some safeguards, as without them no executive could work effectively. The Governor would make use of his special powers, not for sheer pleasure but when compelled to do so. He hoped that occasions to safeguards would be rare. He concluded that the constitution embodied in the J. P. C. Report might not be ideal but it was the only one in the field and it was worth working.

*Khan Bahadur Hafiz Hidayat Hussain* (Delegate to the R. T. C.) declared that the Report was nothing but a mere eyewash of the White Paper proposals differing only in respect of being more reactionary. He felt that until and unless the Report was modified on the lines suggested in the Joint Memorandum of the British Indian Delegation it would not be acceptable to any one in the country. The Report brushed aside authoritative declarations of the British politicians on behalf of His Majesty's Government as to India's ultimate political goal, its most conspicuous feature being the absence of any reference to Dominion Status for the country. Speaking as a representative of the Moslems, Hafiz Hidayat Hussain said that Moslem opinion had been flouted by vesting residuary powers in the Centre and not in the Provinces as unanimously demanded by them. He thought that it was impossible to summon a Constituent Assembly without the help of the Government, for framing an alternative constitution for the country but he welcomed the idea of the Congress co-operating in working the new constitution.

*Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan*, Deputy President, asserted that the constitution proposed was autocracy in the garb of democracy. He agreed with Sir Mahomed Iqbal's description of a Provincial Governor armed with all sorts of autocratic power as a "White Raja". The new constitution would be much more expensive than the present one, which meant that less amount of money would be available for nation-building departments. In conclusion, he appealed to his countrymen to sink their petty differences and combine together for obtaining self-government which was not



a boon to be conferred by any outside authority but which should come from within.

**17th. DECEMBER :—**A feature of to-day's debate on the J. P. C. Report was the trenchant criticism to which Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, Leader of the Opposition, and a member of the First Round Table Conference, subjected the recommendations of the Committee, which he unreservedly condemned as reactionary and retrograde and as such wholly unacceptable to the people of this country.

Paying a tribute to Sir Samuel Hoare, Lord Linlithgow and other members of the J. P. C. for their enormous patience, industry and knowledge which they brought to bear on their task, Mr. Chintamani referred to the Secretary of State's admission, in the course of his speech during the Parliamentary debate, that he was painfully aware that few, if any, publicmen in India regarded the Report as satisfactory and asked if, in the face of the frank confession, was it possible to look at these recommendations with equanimity? He also alluded to the numerous declarations made that the goal of the British policy in India was Dominion Status and deeply regretted that these words were nowhere mentioned either in the White Paper or the J. P. C. Report. What was even more disconcerting was not a single proposal made in the Joint Memorandum of the British Indian Delegation had been accepted. In the course of the Parliamentary debate, no one, except the members of the Labour Party, had one thought to bestow on Indian opinion, Sir Samuel Hoare and Mr. Baldwin being content with an attempt to reconcile the irreconcilables in their own party. In condemning the J. P. C. Report, it was his grateful duty to accord reception to the Minority Report by the Labour Members embodying the noblest sentiments and concrete proposals which would have given very great satisfaction even to radical opinion in India. He concluded : "I take responsibility for speaking as a humble unit of the Indian population. I speak deliberately and unhesitatingly. I would much sooner do without this constitution than accept it. I am quite content not to go on with the present unconstitutional constitution."

The Finance Member, *Sir Edward Blunt*, winding up, congratulated the House on the high standard of the debate on the Report and said that he did not want to deal with the Report in all its aspects but proposed to confine his observations only to few salient features of it. The first question related to safeguards which had been universally condemned because their position had been generally misunderstood. The safeguards were based on Parliamentary Government, whose basic principle was vesting of executive authority, in theory in the King and in practice in his Cabinet, on whose advice he acted on all or almost all occasions. But as none of the four conditions of Parliamentary Government, namely, the existence of real parties, existence of an intelligent and independent body of public opinion, rule by majority and subservience of minorities to majority rule, were fulfilled in the case of India, full-fledged Parliamentary Government here was not possible. He was absolutely confident that the Services would play the game in future with Indian Ministers as they had in the past. Concluding, he said : "I know what India and Indians are capable of. I know especially that when all the tumult and shouting that we have had during the last three days has died down, you will work this constitution and I wish you Godspeed."

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# The C. P. Legislative Council

AUGUST SESSION—NAGPUR—16th. to 22nd. AUGUST 1934.

## ESTABLISHMENT OF LAND MORTGAGE BANKS

The August Session of the Central Provinces Legislative Council commenced at Nagpur on the 16th. August 1934.

An interesting debate followed the Minister, *Mr. Khaparde's* resolution regarding the establishment of land mortgage banks. Two banks are already in existence in Berar and it is now proposed to establish eight more banks. The capital for these banks is to be raised from debentures to be issued by the co-operative banks to the extent of Rs. 50 lakhs.

In moving the resolution *Mr. Khaparde* said : "The question of dealing with agricultural indebtedness has been prominently before the Government for some time past and measures adopted to protect the agriculturist have naturally resulted in making the money-lender more cautious and wary and it is considered necessary that money, at a comparatively cheap rate of interest with instalments spread over a fairly long number of years, should be made available to the agriculturist. It is contemplated that these banks should liquidate past debts and make such advances as may safely be made against security to be pledged by the cultivator to the bank".

*Mr. Kashiprasad Pandey* characterised the Government's proposal as halting and *Dr. Panjab Rao Deshmukh*, ex-Minister, supported him. *Seth Sheolal* feared that these banks would meet the same fate as co-operative banks, which according to him, were being mismanaged and used by directors and others for personal ends. He warned the Government against committing an act which would lower their prestige and bring about economic chaos. *Mr. R.A. Kanithkar* opposed the amendment, though he agreed with the spirit of the amendment. There was no doubt the agriculturist stood in need of financial help all over the province, but they were embarking on an experimental scheme and members could take the present resolution as an index of the earnestness of the Government to help indebted cultivators.

The *Hon'ble Mr. Gordon*, Finance Member, stressed the need for caution.

*Mr. R. N. Banerji*, Revenue Secretary, said that in matters of importance of this kind, it was essential that they should go slowly. More banks could be established, only when experience showed that they should go slowly. More banks could get enough local talent to work them.

Winding up the debate, *Mr. Khaparde* said that Opposition members were asking that a dome to an edifice should be erected first and the foundation late. He proposed to build small but solid foundation first. (Here, here.) Referring to the remarks of one member that the Minister was trying to help his own people, *Mr. Khaparde* said : "All people to me are the same. The interests of the people are at my heart. The Berar Agriculturist is just the same to me as the C. P. Agriculturist."

The House agreed to the motion without division, *Mr. Pande's* amendment suggesting the constitution of banks in every Tehsil in the Province, being rejected by 36 votes to 26.

## C. P. LOCAL SELF-GOVT. 2ND. AMEND. BILL

The Council spent the whole afternoon in discussing official bills.

The C. P. Local Self-Government Second Amendment Bill, 1933 was passed into law, all amendments being thrown out. The Bill was introduced in the Council on July 24, 1933 and empowered local bodies to frame bye-laws for regulating dogs and destroying stray dogs. It also aimed at prohibiting the unauthorised taxes, such as Dharmadaya. The Bill emerged from the Select Committee stage without material change and was passed into law.

## THE C. P. CATTLE DISEASES BILL

The Central Provinces Cattle Diseases Bill was also introduced in the Council on July 24, 1933, with the object of controlling the movements of cattle imported into

this province from outside, to prevent the outbreak of rinderpest and other cattle diseases. *Seth Sheolal* moved two amendments to the Bill but both were thrown out and the Bill was passed into Law.

#### COURT OF WARDS AMEND. BILL

The Hon'ble Mr. *E. Gordon* then presented the report of the Select Committee on the Court of Wards Amendment Bill, 1933, making provision for the exemption from attachment of estate funds in the hands of courts. This amendment was deemed necessary to enable Courts to meet essential commitments entered into with the explicit or implied sanction of the Government. This Bill, too, was passed into law.

#### C. P. MONEY-LENDERS BILL

Discussion on the C. P. Money-lenders Bill, introduced in the Council on January 18, 1934, by Mr. *Raghavendra Rao*, Home Member, was postponed till the 22nd instant as urged by non-official members, in view of the contentious character of the Bill.

#### C. P. TENANCY AMEND. BILL

The Hon'ble Mr. *Gordon* next moved the C. P. Tenancy Amendment Bill No. XX of 1934, which was in pursuance of the policy of the Government to establish some land mortgage banks for advancing long-term loans to the occupancy tenants, if they were able to offer occupancy holdings as security. Messrs. *Kolhe*, *Mangalmurti*, *Khan Bahadur Syed Hifazat Ali*, *Ifthikar Ali* and *Parekh* (Nagpur-Kamptee) opposed the immediate consideration of the Bill and urged its circulation for eliciting public opinion.

Mr. *K. P. Pande* had some very hard things to say to those Councillors who opposed the measure. He could not understand why Councillors, who earlier in the day had urged the Government to establish land mortgage banks, were backing out now and were raising a cry against the Bill, which was more or less prompted by vested interests. The time had now come when the tenantry had to be given certain rights. He was amused to find that he, who had all along opposed the Government, was supporting it, while those who were consistently supporting the Government were now opposing it. He urged the House to adopt the Bill.

Mr. *Kedar*, Opposition Leader, stated that Mr. *Pande* had opposed this very measure during the last session, as the Government wanted to throw it out, but now he was supporting it.

The Hon'ble Mr. *Gordon* said that the question of the rights of the tenantry had been under discussion during the last several years. The Government's position was that it agreed to confer the right of mortgaging tenants' holdings to the extent that land mortgage banks were concerned. With a view to allow representatives of *Malguzars* to express opinion, he agreed to referring the Bill to the Select Committee and in the meanwhile to elicit public opinion thereon.

The Bill will come up for the third reading during the January session. The House unanimously accepted the motion for reference to the Select Committee.

Before adjourning, the House referred Mr. *Gordon's Irrigation Amendment Bill* to the Select Committee.

#### SALARY OF HARIJAN KAMDARS

17th. AUGUST:—In the Council to-day a resolution moved by Mr. *Naik* (Harijan member) recommending to the Government that the salary of every village "Kamadar Mahar" (Harijan) be fixed at Rs. 10 per mensem was thrown out by 8 votes against 29. The division list showed that only two Hindus, three Muslims and one Parsi voted for the resolution, the remaining two votes being those of Harijans. One Harijan member was absent, while the fourth remained neutral.

The contention of Mr. *Naik*, the mover, was that these village officials had multifarious duties to perform and should be adequately compensated for their labours. It was stated on behalf of the Government that the proposal was not feasible in view of the financial stringency. The question had been carefully considered by a Committee appointed in 1922 and the rates then decided upon were still in force.

## SALARY OF PATELS &amp; PATWARIS

A resolution was moved by Mr. *Saphal* (Akola) recommending that the pay of patels and patwaris in Berar should be so increased that no patel or patwari should get less than Rs. 120 per year. The mover's contention was that though these petty officials constituted the most important part of the Governmental machinery, nearly 5,000 out of 6,000 were receiving less than Rs. 100 per year. An increase in their pay would keep them above temptation.

Dr. *Punjab Rao Deshmukh*, Mr. *Tidake* and Mr. *Rajurkar* (all from Berar) supported the motion, which was opposed by the Government on the ground of financial stringency. The resolution was then put to vote and lost by 17 votes against 39.

## AGRICULTURAL INDEBTEDNESS

Mr. *Kanithkar* (Buldana) moved a resolution urging the appointment of an enquiry committee to investigate the problem of the present agricultural indebtedness and suggest administrative and legislative measures to solve it. He said that the problem was a serious one and formed the subject of several resolutions and bills in the House. In order to do away with the necessity of these bills and resolutions he had brought in the present resolution. The question of reducing the existing land revenue rates should also be examined by the committee.

Mr. *K. P. Pande* (Sihora) opposed the resolution as he considered it a waste of money to appoint a fresh committee in view of the fact that the report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture and the Banking Enquiry Committees (both Central and Provincial) had already cost them heavily and the several recommendations made therein had not been adopted. Further, the problem had arisen owing to causes beyond their control. He felt that a five-year plan and not a committee of enquiry was needed to meet the situation.

The *Hon. Mr. E. Gordon*, Revenue Member, said that the Government was aware of the seriousness of the problem and was not sitting idle. They had introduced several measures, some of which had already been enacted into law with a view to relieve distress. He was confident that no other province in India was a whit ahead of them in dealing with this question. There was no royal road to a solution of this problem and the Government was acting within its limitations. The causes of the depression were not only nation-wide but world-wide. The Government of India had already appointed a Marketing Officer and everything was being done which would lead to an economic recovery. It was difficult to see what practical advance they could make by the appointment of a committee especially when several committees had already examined these problems and their accumulated wisdom was lying unused.

Mr. *Kanithkar's* resolution met the same fate as the first two, being thrown out by 11 votes against 87.

## BRANCH OF INDIAN TERRITORIAL FORCE

Mr. *C. F. Waterfall*, Chief Secretary, who rose to reply to the next resolution of Mr. *Thakur Umedsing* (Akola District) urging the Government to open a branch of the Indian Territorial Force for this province said that the Government sympathised with the resolution and would examine the question and do what it can to give effect to the resolution, but there were difficulties in the way, the financial difficulty being chief of such.

The resolution was carried, the Government not having opposed it. The Government promised to forward the discussion to the India Government.

Discussion on the next resolution was proceeding when the House adjourned.

## C. P. LAND REVENUE AMEND. BILL

18th. AUGUST :—Several non-official Bills were referred to the Select Committees in the Council to-day.

Mr. *K. P. Pande's* Land Revenue Amendment Bill, which sought to repeal powers of arrest and detention conferred on the Government for recovery of land revenue dues from defaulters, was defeated by 29 votes to 33. The *Revenue Member* said that the Bill was based on sentiment rather than reasoning and the repeal of these powers would render the recovery of the Government dues very difficult.

## C. P. VILLAGE PANCHAYAT 4th. AMEND. BILL

*Rao Saheb U. S. Patil's* Village Panchayat Fourth Amendment Bill was passed into law, after emerging from the Select Committee stage.

The Bill was intended to remove certain deficits in the existing Act and also made provision for the Government to assign a small percentage of the local cess realized by the district councils to village panchayats on the lines of the Madras and Bombay Village Panchayat Acts.

## C. P. INDUSTRIAL DEBTORS BILL

When *Rao Saheb R. W. Fulay's* Industrial Debtors Bill came up for discussion, the Hon'ble the *Revenue Member* repeated the assurance given by him in the Select Committee that the Government would undertake legislation on this subject and hoped to introduce a bill at the next January sitting of the Council. Accordingly the Bill was not proceeded with on the suggestion of the mover.

## C. P. HOUSE RENT BILL

Mr. *Fulay's* motion on the Central Provinces House Rent Bill for reference to a Select Committee was defeated by 14 votes to 43. The Bill aimed at regulating the rents in industrial and urban areas of Jubbulpore, Nagpur and other places.

On behalf of the Government, Mr. *C. F. Waterfall*, Chief Secretary, opposed the Bill as inopportune, untimely and unnecessary.

## C. P. MUNICIPALITIES 3rd. AMEND. BILL

Mr. *Fulay's* C. P. Municipalities Third Amendment Bill, seeking to extend the life of municipalities from three to five years, evoked a storm of opposition from all sections of the House. The Government did not oppose the Bill, but non-officials opposed it on the ground that the educative value of elections would be lost by extending the life of municipalities in the manner proposed.

*Khan Bahadur Tarapore* thought that the Bill would perpetuate the tyranny of office-bearers whom it was extremely difficult to unseat, as a three-fourths majority was needed for the purpose.

*Rao Bahadur K. S. Nayudu*, Minister, Local Self-Government said that the Government would remain neutral as they had an open mind on the subject and desired to know the sense of the House.

Mr. *Fulay* said that under the new constitution, Provincial Councils would have a lease of five years and it was desirable that local bodies should have a similar term. It would also save much expenditure which bodies have to incur, on account of conducting elections once in every three years.

The Bill was put to vote and lost without a division.

## C. P. ESTATES PROTECTION BILL

Quite a flutter was caused in the afternoon, when several members opposed the very introduction of Mr. *Thakur Manmohan Singh's* (Bilaspur District) C. P. Estates Protection Bill.

*Khan Bahadur Syed Hifazat Ali* (Khandwa) pressed for a division on the issue of granting leave, which was eventually granted by 27 votes to 6.

Mr. *Hifazat Ali* subsequently made it clear that he had opposed the Bill under some misapprehension and that it was contrary to Parliamentary practice.

The *President* remarked that it would be better to establish a convention that leave to introduce a Bill should not be refused, unless the Bill was of a very grave character. The House agreed to establish such a convention.

Mr. *Thakur Manmohan Singh* then moved that the Bill be circulated for eliciting public opinion thereon, but his motion was lost without a division.

Five other non-official Bills were introduced and circulated for eliciting public opinion thereon. The Council then adjourned.

## NO-CONFIDENCE AGAINST PRESIDENT

**21st. AUGUST :—**A motion of No-confidence against the President was moved to-day. Mr. *Kedar*, Opposition Leader, before moving his motion of "no-confidence" requested Mr. *Rizwi* to vacate the chair, as he wanted to bring the whole of the President's conduct before the House. He wanted to be fair to himself.

*President*: I think the motion should be made first.



Mr. Kedar then moved the "no-confidence" motion and reminding the President of the analogy of the Burma Legislative Council, requested him to vacate the chair.

*President*: Is there any rule under the Government of India Act that the President must vacate the chair?

Mr. Kedar: It is a matter of decency. It is a matter of constitutional importance.

*President*: Once a President is in the chair, he cannot remain in the House except as President.

The *President* further pointed out that at the Conference of Presidents and Deputy Presidents of Councils, this matter was fully discussed. He deplored that the President of the Burma Legislative Council did not attend that Conference nor did he care to go through the proceedings of that Conference. President Rizwi was confident that if the President had gone through those proceedings his decision about vacating the chair would have been different. The Presidents' Conference had decided that in such cases, the President ought to preside over the House and thereby defend himself. It was further decided at that Conference that the President had a right to speak in the House, which was perhaps the only exception to the paradox that the President never speaks. The President, therefore, regretted that he could not grant Mr. Kedar's request and vacate the chair.

Mr. Kedar submitted that he did not want the President to leave the House but occupy a seat in the Council as a Member. The President stated that he cannot remain in the House except as President. Mr. Kedar then withdrew his request for vacating the chair and bowed to the President's ruling.

Mr. Kedar then moved the "no-confidence" motion and alleged that the President had not been fulfilling those traditions which the occupant of his office ought to do. He further alleged that the President had not been free from party consideration and that the President had dabbled in political matters, such as wrecking and making of ministries. Mr. Kedar's first accusation was that the President, after election, never forgot that he was a member of the Democratic Party, which elected him President. It was further alleged that he never forgot that he ceased to be a Municipal member and secured nomination for his relatives to the Municipal Committee and also sought to influence the Minister for Local Self-Government for petty favours. The President had admitted in black and white that he took advantage of his position as President in influencing Ministers.

Mr. Kedar then quoted a letter dated 17th February 1932, from the President to the Hon'ble Minister, pleading on behalf of a certain candidate for appointment.

Mr. Kedar further quoted from three other letters of the President to the then Minister in support of his contention. He further stated that they had been watching these undesirable activities patiently for the last three years, but they had now gone too far. Proceeding Mr. Kedar said that when his party (the People's Party) constituted the largest opposition party, they were not given proper seating arrangements, neither were they given their proper seats when they were Ministerialists. Mr. Kedar alleged that the President did so with a view to keep the party disunited and prevent them from taking solid action. Mr. Kedar also contended that the President was looking through coloured glasses and was showing favours to the Democratic Party. They could not, therefore, help putting an uncharitable interpretation on his various rulings, which were given in a spirit of partisanship.

*Rai Bahadur Babu Dwarkanath Singh* opposed the resolution, as the President enjoyed the confidence of members. Though the President belonged to a minority community, he had discharged his duties impartially.

*Khan Bahadur K. F. Tarapore* said that the act of Mr. Jaiswal, then Minister-in-charge of Local Self-Government, in making private letters of the President available to the public, was one of treachery.

Mr. M. Y. Shareef enquired whether the Khan Bahadur's speech was a censure motion against Rai Bahadur Jaiswal.

The *President* remarked that certain remarks of the Khan Bahadur were unparliamentary and he should use milder terms.

Mr. Tarapore: I will now have to go from the torrid zone to the frigid zone. (Laughter).

Proceeding Mr. Tarapore said that the House had nothing to do with the President's letters which were of a private and confidential character.

*Seth Sheolal* deplored the motion of censure, constantly tabled in the House and felt that these were retarding the Province's progress.



Messrs. *Thakur Mannohansing, Arjunlal Kanitker* and *Fulay* also opposed the motion.

The *Reverend Rogers* considered the attack on the President as most unfair and unwarranted, as he felt that the Leader of the Opposition had failed to substantiate the allegations against him (the President). He was confident that no gentleman would hand over letters of a private character to another and no gentleman would receive them. The complaint regarding the seating arrangements made by Mr. Kedar was fanciful and his statements wild. There was not a single ruling given by the President which could be characterised as biased.

The honourable Mr. *Raghavendra Rao*, Home Member, on behalf of the Government, submitted that the Government would consider whether or not to make a statement to-morrow, when the debate had developed.

The *President* enquired if any honourable member was going to support and supplement the accusations against him. Mr. *C. B. Parakh* (Nagpur-Kamtee) rose to support the motion. It was a scandal of political life of the province, he said, that one honourable member of the Government was wrecking one ministry and setting up another the next morning, thus driving one group after the other to form the opposition. He referred to the decision of the President in respect of his questions regarding the downfall of the last Ministry and the part alleged to have been played by a member of the Government and emphasised that he was dissatisfied with the decision in disallowing them. The allegations against the member of the Government were of grave importance and the Chair had not wisely used its discretion in disallowing such questions. His further complaint was that the President's rulings tended to favour the Government side. His object was to get his grievances redressed and if these were rectified by the President, he would ask Mr. Kedar not to press the motion to vote.

Mr. *M. Y. Shareef* (Nagpur Muslims), supporting the motion, alleged that the President had sought favour from a member of the Government for his own relatives. The President, he stated, actually canvassed and worked for particular political party and this was incompatible with his position as whole-time Government servant.

*Khan Bahadur Syed Hifazat Ali* (Khandwa) opposed the motion and said that the letters referred to were merely by way of advice to the Minister, who always consulted the President and other councillors in matters of nomination. *Khan Bahadur Mirza Rahaman Beg* requested Mr. Kedar to withdraw his motion. The House at this stage adjourned.

#### C. P. MONEY-LENDERS' BILL

**22nd. AUGUST :—**After questions and voting on supplementary demands, the Honourable *Raghavendra Rao*, Home Member, presented the Select Committee report on the Money-Lenders' Bill and moved that the same be taken into consideration. *Seth Sheolal* moved an amendment that the loan advanced to a tenant for agricultural purposes should be excluded from the scope of the Bill.

Mr. *C. D. Deshmukh*, Finance Secretary, opposed the amendment. *Rao Saheb Fulay, Khan Bahadur Mirza Rahman Beg, Mr. S. M. Rahman* and Mr. *V. D. Kolte*, on behalf of the People's Party, opposed Mr. *Sheolal's* amendment as it went to the very root of the Bill and the allowing of the amendment would render the Bill useless. *Seth Sheolal* said that the rejection of the amendment would cause great hardships to tenants as they will be unable to procure small loans for agricultural operations. Mr. *Sheolal's* amendment was rejected without a division. Several other amendments to the Bill were either lost or withdrawn. The Bill as a whole was then put to the vote and passed into law. The Bill had been framed with the object of protecting ignorant debtors against fraud and extortion and was based mainly on the Punjab Regulation of Accounts Act, 1930.

#### C. P. MOTOR VEHICLES TAXATION BILL

The Honourable Mr. *Raghavendra Rao's* motion that the Motor Vehicles Taxation Bill be referred to the Select Committee was opposed by non-official members on the ground that the Bill should be circulated for eliciting public opinion thereon. The Bill sought to replace the Act now in force (and which expires in March next) and at the same time increase the existing taxes on vehicles.

In moving the Bill, the *Home Member* stated that the House was committed to the principle of the Bill and that the details thereof, to which non-officials objected, could be settled in the Select Committee.

Mr. *Parakh* said that they would support the Bill only if the Government promised to allot the revenue derived from motor taxation for the restoration of cuts in grants to local bodies.

Replying to the debate, the *Home Member* asked the House to consider in all earnestness whether a house which is about to be dissolved within the next twelve months and would be replaced by a wholly democratic house, was going to leave provincial revenues reduced by Rs. 3 and a half lakhs and embarrass it. He assured the House that all views expressed on the floor of the House would be carefully considered and the Bill would be circulated for eliciting opinion thereon simultaneously. Witnesses who desire to tender evidence before the Committee would be permitted to appear and they would also consider the question of keeping rates at the present level in the Select Committee. He pointed out that motor taxation was a legitimate source of taxation for the Government to impose directly or indirectly, for the purpose of relieving the general tax-payer from the burden of extra cost of maintenance made necessary by the development of more traffic.

The motion for circulation of the Bill was lost by 12 votes to 48. The Bill was then referred to the Select Committee. The other official bills were introduced and circulated for eliciting public opinion thereon.

#### NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION AGAINST PRESIDENT

Resuming the debate on the No-confidence motion in the President, Mr. *Gordon*, Revenue Member, on behalf of the Government, said that one of the charges against the President was that the President had not used his discretion properly in disallowing some questions. The Government had always bowed to the ruling of the President and he asked the Honourable Members to do so. As regards the allegations about the political scandal of which the President was aware and which he was alleged to have suppressed, Mr. *Gordon* submitted that the whole affair came to a close on March 9. last, with the dismissal of the Ministry. Mr. *Gordon* was amazed at the charge levelled against the Chair by Mr. *Kedar*, leader of the People's Party. The leader of the People's Party had made out no case against the President and it passed the Revenue Member's comprehension how the President's action at the time when he gave his casting vote against the last Ministry, that the Ministry should resign, could in any way be called as an action prompted by bias and was other than honest. The Revenue Member could not remember a single incident during the President's last four years' career, when the President had acted partially.

The *President* then called upon Mr. *Kedar* to make his final speech.

Mr. *Kedar* enquired whether the President was not going to make any statement. The *President* replied that he would make a statement before putting the motion to the House.

Mr. *Kedar* submitted that the President was in the position of an accused and he had the right to make statement, but it was inherently wrong to say that the accused will have the final right of reply.

The *President* conceded that he was to be defended by the House and the Honourable Members of the House, who spoke against the "no-confidence" motion, had defended him and under the Standing Orders, the President could address the House before putting the motion to the vote of the House.

Replying to the debate, Mr. *Kedar* said that it was a mistake to divorce the President's conduct outside the House from his conduct in the Council. If it could be shown that the President's dignity, high integrity and other qualities had been impaired by virtue of his conduct outside the House, when he sought favours from the Minister for Local Self-Government, the charges against the President had been proved and it could confidently be said that the President was unfit to occupy the Chair. Even the Revenue Member had not supported the President in his conduct outside the House in seeking petty favours from the Minister. There was nothing in his defence which mitigated the constitutional offence that had been committed. The speeches of those who supported the President seemed to him to have been written by the same hand and appeared to have been prepared before the mover had opened his lips (Laughter). What they wanted was a president who would not dabble in party politics, either inside or outside the House, and would act up to the ideals set up by the Speaker in the House of Commons.

Concluding Mr. *Kedar* urged that if the President's conscience told him that he had acted in a manner in which he should not have acted and sought favours from the Minister, it was his business to resign from the Presidentship, notwithstanding the verdict of the House.

The *President* then made a statement, in the course of which he said that his letters to Rai Bahadur Jaiswal were of a private and confidential nature and, therefore, could not, according to Parliamentary convention, be published or read in the House without his consent and he would have been within his rights to rule them out on that ground, but to avoid misunderstanding he raised no objection. Some letters referred to were by way of reply and contained civic and private matters and made no suggestion as to any political bent on his part, but he ventured to say that the traditions of his predecessors in office were not to the contrary. Anyway none, not even Rai Bahadur Jaiswal, who was present in the House, and whose sympathy with the motion was evidenced by the delivery of these letters to Mr. Kedar had been able to cite a single instance of his judgment having been influenced by such matters. Referring to his continuing as a member of the Raipur Municipality until recently, the President said that he was nominated to that body prior to his election as President and that there were precedents to such practice. As regards his alleged wrong judgment in declaring the result on a motion on a Bill on Saturday last, the President stated that the accusation was childish. Further his discussion was covered by the words "I think Ayes have it" and anyone who felt aggrieved at his decision was entitled to demand a division. The accusation with regard to the non-allocation of proper seats to the People's Party was frivolous and the seating arrangements made by him had no motive behind it. As regards the charges levelled against him by Mr. Parakh that the President had admitted a resolution provisionally when, under the Standing Orders, he had no power to do so and that he should have either admitted or disallowed resolutions in respect of the alleged conduct of the Home Member in bringing about the downfall of the last Ministry, the President said that he did so as he wanted to consult the party leaders. In regard to the charge that he incorrectly used his discretions in disallowing certain questions of Mr. Parakh pertaining to the same subject, the President said that this was a matter where there was room for honest difference of opinion, but still it could not, by any stretch of imagination, be made ground for supporting a 'no confidence' motion, as was done by Mr. Parakh.

Continuing, the President said that what passed between Messrs. Shareef and Choubal (ex-Ministers) on the one hand, His Excellency the Governor on the other could not, by any stretch of imagination, be brought within the scope of admissibility. Whether the allegations made against the Home Member by the 'People's Voice', (a local paper) were true or false was a question for the Home Member in his personal and private capacity. No member of the Government, in his official capacity, was responsible for that matter. Although these questions were clearly inadmissible (on being reframed) they were allowed by the President by stretching the point in favour of the Member asking them. Instead of being thankful to the President for admitting these and giving them publicity on the floor of the House, the Member had made them ground for an unfair attack.

The President added, "Much has been made by the mover and another member of the reasons I gave for giving my casting vote in favour of the last Ministry. Enough has been said already in my defence by several honourable members. Suffice it to say that if the Hon'ble Mr. Shareef had not forgotten to vote for the "No-Confidence" motion against his colleague, the Hon'ble Mr. Chaobal, my casting vote would have undoubtedly retained them in office and probably no motion for the removal of the President would have been thought of either by him or by his leader, Mr. Kedar. It is clear that the whole Democratic Party was in favour of "No-Confidence" motion and if I had ever thought of favouring that Party, I could have done so by voting in favour of the motion and supporting it by at least one precedent, but I gave my vote for Mr. Shareef, not at all caring for the interests of the Democratic Party. I think this one decision of mine is a complete answer to all the reckless attacks that have been made. My advice to the Hon'ble Mr. Shareef contained in a ruling was given in a friendly spirit and with the best of motives and I am sorry it has lent itself to misinterpretations, but I still feel there is nothing which I should not have said".

Mr. Kedar's motion was put to vote and lost by 55 votes to 6. The President was cheered. The Council then adjourned *sine die*.

# The B. & O. Legislative Council

*AUTUMN SESSION—RANCHI—3rd. to 18th. SEPTEMBER 1934.*

## THE GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH

The Autumn Session of the Behar & Orissa Legislative Council commenced at Ranchi on the 3rd. September 1934. Addressing the Council His Excellency the Governor took the opportunity to explain the Government measures, relief and reconstruction plans in connection with the earthquake disaster in north Bihar.

His Excellency said: 'I think we are justified now in taking a hopeful view', the danger to agriculture from pouring out of sand on lands and change of levels, which endangered the natural drainage, seemed now of less magnitude than was apprehended first.

Summarising the measures through official agencies for relief of earthquake sufferers, His Excellency said that the responsibility for half the cost of reconstruction of Government residences, offices, and property and rehabilitation of local bodies including restoration of aided school buildings and hospitals etc. They also agreed to provide the expenditure necessary for clearing sugarcane in Tirhut. The Government of India also will bear the total cost of the engineering staff appointed by the local Government in addition to the ordinary staff of Public Works department, costing about 1 and three-fourth lakhs. The burden which the local Government had to carry included the cost of Reconstruction department and the general items connected with earthquake, half the cost of reconstruction of Government offices, buildings not borne by the Government of India, grants for clearance of sand (from the Famine Relief Fund), loans to agriculturists of all classes and loans for rebuilding houses. Most of the expenditure could not be met out of the revenue and they had to borrow on a large scale from the Government of India. 'In round figures the Government of India and local Government have contributed 9 and half lakhs each in 1935-34 and in the course of the current year I anticipate on the basis of present estimates that the Government of India will contribute more than half a crore of rupees towards restoration while the local Government will spend 27 lakhs in addition to make loans of various kinds to the extent of 83 lakhs.

The sphere of relief for private individuals was covered by grants from the Viceroy's Earthquake Relief Fund. Disbursements by the honorary treasurer from the Bihar and Orissa branch of the Viceroy's Earthquake Relief Fund upto a fortnight ago amounted to 51 and a half lakhs and there were further liabilities for seven lakhs. The largest heads of expenditure were 10 and a half lakhs for urban house building grants, 16 lakhs for rural house building grants and nine lakhs for charitable relief. Altogether by the end of this year something like two and a half crores of rupees would have been put into circulation in north Bihar in various kinds of grants and loans and expenditures towards the restoration of that country. His Excellency referred particularly to the successful work of relief accomplished in regard to the disposal of sugarcane crop by the Marketing Board which marketed 26 lakhs maunds at prices which averaged less than four annas per maund. This insured a profitable disposal of almost the whole of north Bihar sugarcane.

Regarding the recent severe floods his Excellency said that details were being collected and as soon as done Mr. J. T. Whitty would make a statement.

## THE DARBHANGA IMPROVEMENT BILL

**3rd. SEPTEMBER :—**The Council discussed to-day the Darbhanga Improvement Bill. This official measure was designed towards replanning of the congested areas in Darbhanga town which suffered a severe damage from the earthquake of Jan, 15 so as to render them safer in the event of another earthquake and providing better sites for the population. The Maharaja of Darbhanga had agreed to make a gift of Rs. 9 lakhs for financing the improvement trust.

Mr. Brett, Secretary, reconstruction department, moved for a select committee for the bill with the direction to make a report by September 7. Mr. Mahomed Shafi moved an amendment for circulating the Bill for the purpose of eliciting



public opinion. Mr. *Hasan Jan* supported the motion for circulation. Mr. *Dwarka Nath* asked the members not to throw away a golden opportunity offered by the Bill for improving Darbhanga town on modern lines. The hon. Mr. *Nirsu Narayan Sinha* said that the Bill in an improved form would be a great boon. The discussion had not concluded when the Council adjourned till the 4th September when it referred the Bill to a select committee with directions to report by September 7.

#### B. & O. CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES BILL

**5th. SEPTEMBER:**—The Council referred the Bihar and Orissa Co-operative Societies Bill to a Select Committee. Piloting the Bill, the Hon. Mr. *Saiyid Abdul Aziz*, Minister of Education, expressed the hope that the Bill now drafted would go a long way to meet the special requirements of the province and help to place the co-operative movement on a sound footing.

Mr. *Sachchidananda Sinha*, leader of the Opposition, asked the Government not to hesitate in spending money required for the proper development of the movement and trusted that after the Bill was placed in the Statute Book, the Government would feel their responsibility in the administration of the co-operative department all the greater and discharge the duties all the better. He suggested that the Select Committee would suitably modify the Bill. *Rai Bahadur Lachmi Prasad Sinha* and several other non-officials supported the measure.

#### B. & O. CESS AMENDMENT BILL

The Bihar and Orissa Cess Amendment Bill, as an official measure, was referred to a Select Committee, 36 voting for an 32 against it.

#### B. & O. INDIAN FOREST AMEND. BILL

Two other non-contentious official Bills, the *Indian Forest (Bihar and Orissa Amendment) Bill*, and the *Bihar and Orissa Motor Vehicles Taxation Amendment Bill*, were taken into consideration and passed.

#### B. & O. MOTOR VEHICLES TAXATION BILL

The former Bill aimed at clarifying the legal position regarding the reservation and protection of forests on the application of the Court of Wards and the encumbered estates, and the latter reducing the tax levied on motor bicycles and tricycles.

#### OTHER BILLS

The *Bihar and Orissa Municipal Amendment Bill*, providing for compulsory notification of infectious diseases, and the *Bihar and Orissa Nurses Registration Bill*, providing for the registration and better training of nurses, and midwives and dais, being official measures, were also referred to a Select Committee.

#### BEHAR FLOOD—OFFICIAL ACCOUNT

**6th. SEPTEMBER:**—In the Council to-day the hon. Mr. *Whitty*, on behalf of the Government, made an important statement on the Behar floods, giving a summary of events in general terms. He said that the flood in the Ganges was abnormally high and abnormally prolonged. Along with some parts of its course it rose with great rapidity and on some Diaras and riverside villages a rapid rise took place during the night. The severity of flood arose from the coincidence of abnormal floods in the Ganges and its great tributaries, the Jumna, Sone and the Gogra. The Jumna rose to the height of only six inches short of the record of 1916 level and the Sone reached an abnormal height which it attained in 1923.

Dealing with floods in Sahabad district, he said that the Sone was at a high level for a short time only, but it came down with great velocity and caused severe damage to the area on its west bank. Nearly all houses in Bahiara and the neighbouring villages and along a considerable part of the Sone had collapsed. At the Sande police station three lives were lost and at the Sahar police station one life was lost. Bhadai crop in the west Sone area had been almost entirely destroyed. Report of loss of cattle was being received, but the number had not yet been ascertained.

In the north of Arrah considerable area of the country was still under water. The principal damage to the house property was in the village which lay back to the Ganges from Salempur in the west to Makdumpur in the east. When the Collector visited this area he found a number of *tolas* almost completely submerged by



water and the people standing on the roofs of their houses with goods and cattle. In other villages inhabitants with their cattle were crowded on to areas of higher ground. Many poor people and labouring classes in flooded areas were in need of food and arrangements were made for its distribution, as well as for the distribution of fodder. Bhadaï crop in the north of Arrah like that along the west bank of the Sone had been largely destroyed. Distribution of *takavi* for seed as well as gratuitous relief was necessary and would be made.

After giving details of floods in other districts of Patna division, which have already been published in a recent Government communique, he referred to floods in the Tirhut division. In Saran district the whole area from Goldenganj to Sonapur between the railway embankment and the Ganges was under water. On the night of August 24 and 25 local officers were busy in protecting embankments and sent out relief parties to Diaras. The flood reached its highest level in the early morning of August 25 and part of Chapra town was 3 and one-fourth ft. under water. The railway line was breached or cut at several places between Dighwara and Sonapur and between Santa and Dighwara. Various relief centres were opened. By the evening of August 26 water had gone down considerably and the situation at Chapra easier. But on August 27 the Naini *bandh* embankment about four miles from Chapra town collapsed and a great volume of water moved towards Garkha and Parea, flooding a large number of villages. No loss of human life from Saran district had been reported to the Collector so far. He reports that there had been some loss of cattle but the exact number could not be given. Very great damage had been done to the standing *bhadaï* and *rabi* crops.

In the area between the railway embankment and the Ganges east of Goldenganj almost all mud houses collapsed. The damage to the railway was very serious and one of the breaches between Dighwara and Sonapur is reported to be 450 ft. wide. This might take some weeks to repair.

In the Muzaffarpur district the area affected lay in the Raghapur and Mehnar police stations and the southern villages of Hajipur police station. In Mehnar police station the villages most affected were those that were situated in the south arm of the Gandak. The sub-divisional officer reports that about 2,000 people and 150 heads of cattle were rescued in these villages. There were three large boats from Calcutta in Mehnar when the flood rose in the morning of August 24 and these were commandeered to rescue work. Thirty or 40 heads of cattle were believed to be lost in this area.

Other villages of the *thana* were flooded by the Gandak. In Raghapur grave anxiety existed for the safety of a number of inhabitants of villages Birpur and Chak Mahabal. These two villages received the full force of the flood and it was known that many inhabitants were washed away in the early morning of Aug. 24. From village Birpur out of 150 inhabitants 125 had already been reported safe while it is believed that in the other village Chak Mahabal was evacuated before the flood reached it. There was still no news of the 25 persons of village Birpur and further telegraphic report from the collector was expected to-day.

In the Darbhanga district the area affected by the Ganges floods was the area of Mohiuddin Nagar *thana* on the south of the Ganges embankment. The area was approximately 15 miles west to the east and eight miles north to south. The inhabitants of the southern part of this area were accustomed to flood but the northern part was inundated only in exceptional floods. The *bhadaï* crops of this area had been almost entirely destroyed. A number of persons were rescued by boats requisitioned by the sub-inspector of police. One death in this area had been reported but no loss of cattle is believed to have taken place. There was every reason to hope that a good *rabi* crop would be secured here.

In the Monghyr district the Ganges by the morning of Aug. 25 reached a high flood level of 120 ft. At that point it remained stationary for over 24 hours and then it began to fall very slowly. On the morning of Aug. 25 a large number of Diara villages was seriously threatened and three ferry steamers were employed for rescue work. On Aug. 27 and 28 the threatened parts of large Binda Diara were cleared by steamers and country boats and 3,000 people were landed at near Bariarpur. Several thousand heads of cattle had been rescued and grazed in the nearest Banalli jungle. No loss of human life was reported from Monghyr district. The damaged crops could not well be estimated but it was undoubtedly very great.

An outbreak of cholera had been reported from Gogri and the district health officer visited the spot.

A letter from the Collector mentioned the rescue of a man, woman and a goat who floated down to Kuthupur Diara, Monghyr district from their home in Muzaffarpur district. From Bhagalpur district no loss of human life was reported.

In the Purnea district almost 50 villages on the north bank of the Ganges. Barari and Manihari *thanas* were inundated and a great damage was done to the standing crop but no loss of life or cattle was reported.

Mr. Whitty expressed appreciation of the splendid work of local officers in meeting such a grave emergency with a great promptness, courage and resource. He assured the Council that the Government would do all that was possible and he knew the Government could rely on the continued help and goodwill of the people throughout the province.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS

Thereafter the *Finance Member* read a note regarding the financial position and emphasised the necessity of supplementary demands covering some 99 lakhs.

Nineteen supplementary questions were asked. One evoked some criticism when *Moulvi Ghani* pointed out the necessity of appointing only the people of the Province to posts payable from the 'quake relief funds. Mr. *Nanda Kumar Ghosh* objected saying that since the funds came from other provinces also, in making appointments the claims for outsiders should as well be considered but Mr. *Sachchidananda Sinha*, leader of the Opposition, disagreed and said that the people of other provinces did not send charity in the hope of compensation by providing men of their provinces.

After lunch consideration of supplementary demands were resumed and were passed without much questions. The demand of one and a half lakhs in connection with reconstruction work in quake-stricken areas in Bihar, raised a somewhat lively debate which raised the question again of providing Biharee young men with posts and Biharee contractors with orders. With this question prominent members like Mr. *Sinha*, *Babu Srikrishna Prasad* and Mr. *Hafiz* associated themselves. The term Biharee was, however, defined by including in it all communities domiciled in Bihar. In this connection *Pandit Misra* raised a point that when such a large amount was to be spent on establishment, it would have been right for Government to indicate in the estimate the work which this highly paid officers will have to perform.

#### REMOVAL OF GOVT. BUILDINGS FROM MOTIHARI

A demand in connection with the shifting of the Government quarters in Motihari to a newly selected area, about three miles from the town proper, was under debate when the Council adjourned.

**7th. SEPTEMBER :—**The Council voted several supplementary demands aggregating about Rs. 90,00,000 mostly in respect of various objects in connection with earthquake relief and restoration. Non-officials raised a debate over the proposal for acquisition of a new site for the earthquake shattered district headquarters of Motihari for which Rs. 50,000 was asked for.

The hon. Mr. *Whitty*, on behalf of the Government, explained that Lautaha site which was selected for the purpose was about two and a half miles from the present courts and was the most suitable and safe site to rebuild according to experts, the other alternative sites being considered impossible.

Non-officials including Mr. *Meyrick*, Mr. *Sachchidananda Sinha*, *Raja P. C. Lall* and Mr. *Dwarka Nath* opposed the acquisition of the proposed site, asserting that it would be inconvenient and unhealthy for the people of Motihari and urged the Government to make further inquiries with a view to exploring other sites for the purpose.

The hon. Mr. *Whitty*, on behalf of the Government, giving an assurance said his Excellency the Governor would shortly visit Motihari and inspect the proposed site and then make a financial decision. The grant was voted by the Council.

*Sir Ganesh Dutt Singh*, Minister, Local Self-Government, moved a resolution, asking the Council to sanction a grant not exceeding Rs. 2,00,000 for the Muzaffarpur Municipality for a scheme of road widening, which was passed after some discussion.

## B. &amp; O. ZAMINDARS' PROTECTION BILL

**10th. SEPTEMBER :—**The non-official attendance was large and public galleries crowded when the Council discussed to-day the non-official tenancy legislation for Bihar which sought solution to many outstanding agrarian problems affecting the relations between landlords and tenants.

Mr. *Bhagwati Saran Singh* introduced the Bihar and Orissa Zamindars' Protection Bill which was designed to save zamindars from indebtedness and make provision for safety of their zamindaris.

## THE BIHAR TENANCY AMEND. BILL

*Rai Bahadur Shyamnandan Sahay* presented the select committee's report on the Bihar Tenancy Amendment Bill and moved that the bill as reported by the select committee be taken into consideration. The Rai Bahadur explained that though the progress of the bill was inevitably delayed they had been able to arrive at a solution of the outstanding question by mutual agreement between the representatives of landlords and and this he considered was a great achievement. The welfare of the tenants was the concern of all of them and it was creditable on the part of landlords that they had extended all possible concessions to tenants.

The hon. Mr. *Whitty*, on behalf of the Government, said that the report of the select committee on the bill had been signed without dissent by Government members and this might be taken as showing that Government approved the bill in the form in which it was now being presented. He emphasised on the point that the bill was the outcome of many years' discussion and it gave effect only to the changes which were admitted in all the previous discussions to be needed and the form in which the present bill had emerged at last had been accepted by representatives of principal parties whose interests were involved. The Council then discussed the bill clause by clause.

A large number of amendments had been tabled by different members representing the interests of landlords and tenants. Most of the amendments were negatived but the one sponsored by Mr. *S. Sinha* which provided that the tenants should have the right of unchallenged use of tanks excavated in cash-rent paying holdings without prejudice to landlord's right to "jalkar".

Another important amendment which was moved by *Babu Bimala Charan Sinha* sought to give to the tenants the right to trees in respect of lands for which produce rent was payable. But it was opposed by Government. The motion was pressed to a division and declared lost by 63 against 11 votes. A special feature of voting on this motion was that *Sir Ganesh Dutt Singh* remained neutral, while all other official members voted against the amendment.

**11th. SEPTEMBER :—**After two days' debate the Council passed to-day, with certain minor amendments, the Bihar Tenancy Amendment Bill. Important features of the bill are that it concedes to the Raiyats complete rights in trees, in cash-paying or rent-free holdings and half share in trees and their product generally in the case of produce-rented holdings and gives them the right of transfer of their occupancy holdings on payment of 8 per cent. of consideration money as the landlord's fee and also payment of rent by money order.

## PUSA RESEARCH INSTITUTE

**12th. SEPTEMBER :—**The Council recorded its emphatic and unanimous protest against the Govt. of India's proposal to transfer the Pusa Agricultural Research Institute to Delhi. Mr. *W. H. Meyrick*, planters' representative, moved a resolution urging that the Pusa Institute be not transferred to any other province unless this Council was given full opportunity to discuss such a proposal and express its views on the same. Mr. *Meyrick* contended that there was no justification for spending Rs. 35 lakhs on the new institute at Delhi instead of repairing the Pusa Institute at the cost of nine lakhs.

Mr. *Sri Narayan Mahtha* moved an amendment that in the event of the Institute being transferred from Pusa an adequate branch or sub-station of the same be maintained at Pusa with a view to ensuring that the success achieved in that centre during the last 25 years was not wasted and the experimental work was continued on the same line while other work was taken up in the main institute at Delhi.

Members of all sections of the house including *Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha*, *Rai Bahadur Dwarka Nath* and *Khan Bahadur Saghirul Haq* supported the amended resolution. *Hon. Mr. Aziz*, Minister, in accepting the resolution whole-heartedly on behalf of the Government, said that he did not associate himself with all that was said by the members. He undertook to forward a copy of the resolution and the debate to the Government of India. Though it seemed to him that the decision regarding the transfer was irrevocable he could console himself with the belief not without foundation, that at least an important branch of the Institute will be retained at Pusa.

The amended resolution was carried unanimously.

#### FIXING OF SUGAR-CANE PRICE

A resolution to fix the price of cane in all cane-growing areas was moved *Babu Shyamanandan Sahay* but an assurance being given by the Government that steps were being taken in the matter, it was withdrawn.

#### INCREASE OF GRANTS TO M. E. SCHOOLS

Another resolution was moved by *Babu Radha Prasad* urging the Government to increase from 4 per cent to 6 per cent the grant to Middle English Schools.

The *D. P. I.* on behalf of the Government stated by quoting figures that primary education was suffering woefully and required spending of more money on it making it thus impossible to enhance the grant to M. E. Schools. The resolution was withdrawn.

#### MOTION FOR LIQUOR COMMITTEE

**13th. SEPTEMBER:**—The Council debated a non-official resolution moved by *Mr. N. K. Ghosh* urging the appointment of a committee to enquire and report the desirability or otherwise of the abolition of outstill system for country liquor in the province. The mover and several non-officials supporting the resolution criticised the system and asserted that it was increasing drunkenness and demoralising the people while others opposed that view.

*Sir Ganesh Dutt Singh*, Minister, *Mr. Lacey*, secretary and *Mr. Peck*, excise commissioner defending the Government policy maintained that the changes introduced by outstill system had contributed towards the increase in excise revenue and checking considerably the illicit distillation. They also pointed out that though there might have been visible intoxication as a result of new changes introduced but that was a set off against the invisible drunkenness which the new policy had been able to check to a very large extent and when the system was still at an experimental stage no useful purpose would be served by appointment of an enquiry committee. The Council rejected the resolution by 53 votes to 18.

#### NON-OFFICIAL RESOLUTIONS

**14th. SEPTEMBER:**—The Council debated two non-official resolutions to-day. One was moved by *Khan Bahadur Saghirul Haque*, urging the introduction by the Government of a new minor irrigation works bill and the other by *Rai Bahadur Lachmi Prasad Sinha*, demanding the nomination of a non-official to represent cultivators' interest on the Indian Lac Cess Committee. Both resolutions were withdrawn after the Government reply. Regarding the first the hon. *Mr. Nirsu Narayan Sinha* invited the members to make concrete suggestions to solve the difficulties with which the problem was bristled, the main difficulty being financial.

Regarding the second, the hon. *Mr. Whitty* stressed the advantage to lac cultivators through the agency of official representation on the Lac Cess Committee which had produced good result in the interest of industry and cultivators and pointed out that official representation on the committee was in conformity with the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Agriculture. The Council then adjourned till 17.

#### B. & O. MUSSALMAN WAKF BILL

**17th. SEPTEMBER:**—The Council disposed of the outstanding non-official business to-day. The consideration of Bihar and Orissa Mussalman Wakf Bill was postponed till the Patna session of the Council on the motion of *Mr. S. M. Hafeez*. 53 voting for and nine Muslim members against the motion. While the non-Muslim view and the Government view agreed on postponing the consideration on various grounds, important amendments, however, were given notice of at the eleventh hour



and as such amendments had an important bearing on the bill as a whole and as the rights of non-Muslims were also involved and required a careful consideration, the Muslim members led by the author of the bill, Mr. *Hasan Jan*, demanded immediate consideration on the ground that the question for providing a suitable machinery for better control and governance of Muslim religious and charitable endowments had been hanging for the last seven years and Muslim opinion was almost emphatic and unanimous in having the legislation for the purpose passed without further loss of time.

#### B. & O. ZAMINDARS' PROTECTION BILL

The Bihar and Orissa Zamindars' Protection Bill initiated by Mr. *Bhagwati Saran Singh* in order to save the zamindars from indebtedness and make provision for the safety of their properties was allowed to be circulated for eliciting public opinion.

#### THE DARBHANGA IMPROVEMENT BILL

**18th. SEPTEMBER :—**The Council placed on the statute book four official bills, including the Darbhanga Improvement Bill designed to improve and replan the congested areas of Darbhanga town so as to render them safer in the event of another earthquake and provide better sites for the population, Mr. *W. B. Brett*, member in charge of the bill, explained to the Council how the bill had been improved by the select committee with a view to safeguard the interests of the poorer classes. An essential feature of the improvement scheme was that all persons who were displaced should not have only an opportunity of securing from the Improvement Trust a seat which would suit their special needs but they should also be able to secure it on reasonable terms. The amendments moved by *Maulavi Abdul Ghani* to the bill were either withdrawn or rejected without division.

Mr. *Sachchidananda Sinha*, leader of the Opposition, supporting the bill pointed out that there was no justification for the apprehension that the provisions of the bill would impose a financial burden on the people of Darbhanga in some shape or form. He added that by passing the bill unanimously the Council would have expressed its genuine appreciation of the large-hearted generosity of the Maharaja-dhiraj of Darbhanga, the premier nobleman of the province, whose substantial donation of Rs. 5 lakhs would enable the residents of Darbhanga to enjoy many hygienic advantages and social amenities without being called upon to pay for the same.

#### OTHER OFFICIAL BILLS

The three other bills passed by the Council were the *Patna University Amendment Bill*, the *Bihar and Orissa Cess Amendment Bill* and the *Bihar and Orissa Village Administration Amendment Bill*.

The Council was then prorogued.

## The Punjab Legislative Council

WINTER SESSION—LAHORE—25th. OCTOBER to 21st. DECEMBER 1934.

#### NON-OFFICIAL BILLS DISCUSSED

The Winter Session of the Punjab Legislative Council commenced at Lahore on the 25th. October 1934 when it held a short sitting to transact non-official business.

Mr. *Muhammad Din Malak's* motion to refer the *Punjab Municipal Executive Officers' (Amendment) Bill* to a select committee was lost.

*Shrimati Lekhwati Jain* introduced the *Punjab Anti-Beggary Bill* which was circulated for eliciting public opinion. The Bill aimed at driving out begging from public places and streets and imposed a penalty of three months' rigorous imprisonment or fine.



*Pandit Nanak Chand* introduced the *Suppression of Immoral Traffic Bill* with the object of securing a consolidated legislation to give the authorities such powers as may aid them in checking the evil of traffic in women and children and give them the means whereby protection may be afforded to those in danger from procurers, traffickers and others engaged in commercialised vice. The mover wanted the bill to be referred to a select committee, but the Government amendment to circulate the Bill was carried, *Pandit Nanak Chand* not opposing its circulation.

#### OTHER NON-OFFICIAL BILLS

Two other non-official bills, namely, the *Punjab Small Towns (Amendment) Bill* and the *Punjab Village Panchayat (Amendment) Bill* were also circulated.

#### PUNJAB RELIEF INDEBTEDNESS BILL

**26th. OCTOBER :—**Considerable interest was displayed when *Mr. D. J. Boyd*, Finance Member, moved that the Punjab Relief Indebtedness Bill as reported by the Select Committee be taken into consideration. *Dr. Boyd* said that Government's position had been that if the Unionist Party and their friends (whose seven representatives on the Select Committee constituted majority as against the remaining six including three each of Government and Urban interests) decided to press the last three clauses of the Bill, Government would support the motion for circulation. But, now, he had been informed that the Unionists were not pressing those clauses and Government was now anxious to see the Bill passed into law. *Pandit Nanakchand's* point of order that the Bill had been so altered as to constitute a new Bill altogether fell through, the House holding with the leader of the House that the changes were not so drastic.

*Raja Narendranath* moved an amendment that the Bill be recirculated for eliciting public opinion until 15th. February 1935. He said that the altered Bill affected other legislative enactments and pending cases and Government should either withdraw the Bill or recirculate it. *Chaudhri Riasatali* and *Sardar Arjansingh* opposed the amendment.

*Pandit Nanakchand* said that if Government really wished to protect agriculturist debtors it should make appropriate changes in the Land Alienation Act which alone, by creating vicious circles, was responsible for reducing the margin of security against loans, thereby putting up the rate of interest debtors whose field for realising the full value of his immovable assets was limited by the Act and hence only enabled him to obtain fraction of its actual worth.

There had been a stream of amendments from various groups and interests to the Bill. A proposal had been made by *Mrs. Lekhawati Jain*, to add three penal provisions to the Bill as a separate chapter under which it would be a penal offence for any creditor to demand payment of debt from a debtor, or attempt to execute a decree which shall be punishable by 12 months' imprisonment or fine not exceeding the amount of debt. Similarly, any one refusing to advance loan to an agriculturist when asked to do so shall be punishable with a year's imprisonment or fine not exceeding the amount of loan sought. All the said offences shall be cognisable and non-bailable and shall only be triable by Magistrates belonging to the statutory agriculturist tribes (who are prime beneficiaries of the Bill). Fine in each case if realised shall be paid to the agriculturist debtor as compensation.

**29th. OCTOBER :—**A suggestion to the Government to invite *Mr. Gandhi* to the Punjab to inaugurate his proposed village reconstruction scheme and help the indebted Punjab agriculturist was made in the Council to-day by *Pandit Nanakchand* (a delegate to the Round Table Conference) opposing the Indebtedness Bill. In the course of a three-hours' speech, the *Pandit* said that the agriculturist should be helped but the Bill hardly benefited the agriculturist. The best way to help him was to lessen the burden of land revenue and the first step in effecting this was to cut down the salaries of Indian Members in the Government. He also appealed to the Government to pay more attention to village reconstruction. *Mr. Gandhi* could help them in this connection, if they invited him to the Punjab but the present Bill would only destroy credit in the countryside. Citing an instance of how an ignorant rural debtor was crushed by a moneylender belonging to his own class, the *Pandit* said that he himself had acted as Counsel for a creditor who obtained a decree for Rs. 7,000 from the High Court for Rs. 23, the actual sum lent.

Messrs. *Abdul Ghani* and *K. B. Mahomed Zamalkhan* supported the measure as also *Kanwar Maharaj Singh* (solitary supporter from the Hindu group) who maintained that the Bill did not go far enough.

*Mrs. Lekhwati Jain*, supporting *Raja Narendranath's* circulation motion, hinted at strong agitation all over the Punjab, if the Bill was passed into law and also held out a threat that traders would boycott British goods and order Japanese and German goods to intensify agitation.

**30th. OCTOBER :—**About half a dozen more speakers participated in the resumed debate on the Bill in the Council, including *Mr. Wace*, Registrar of Co-operative Societies and *Chaudhury Choturam*, leader of the Unionist Party, who were strong supporters of the Bill. *Chaudhuri Choturam* denied that the amended Bill was framed at his dictation as alleged and refuted the charges brought by the opponent of the Bill. *Mr. Wace* said the Government were only proceeding on an arbitrating basis.

**1st. NOVEMBER :—**After four days' discussion on the Indebtedness Bill, *Raja Narendranath's* amendment for re-circulation was defeated by a large majority and the motion for consideration of the Bill was carried.

The only speaker on the Bill to-day was *Mr. Choturam*, who, in the course of a two hours' speech, said that the Bill was not a "class measure" as it benefited all classes of debtors. He denied that there was any "alliance" as alleged between the Government and the Unionist Party and appealed to the House to support the Bill on humanitarian grounds as the debtor ryot was crushed by stupendous debts. Interest alone was ten times the total annual land revenue of the Province.

*Mr. Boyd*, Finance Member, replying, said that their only understanding with the Unionist Party was that they should not press for the last three clauses in the amendment Bill and if they did not the Government would be compelled to support re-circulation, as the opinion of High Courts, etc., would have to be obtained. The Council then adjourned to November 12.

**12th. NOVEMBER :—**The Council had a stormy session to-day when discussion on the Indebtedness Relief Bill was resumed. The rival groups were the Rural party composed of Muslim and Sikh agriculturist class members, who stood for a reduction of interest to the minimum and generally lessening the debt burden on agriculturist classes by legislation, and the Hindu Urban party with the Government playing the roll of moderator of the Rural party's drastic demands. There was a split in the National Reform or Urban party, however, which enabled the Rural party to inflict three successive defeats on the Government and the Urbanites combined and to carry their own proposal with regard to the interest classes, the Government on this last occasion remaining neutral.

The Select Committee had generally banned compound interest and limited simple interest on secured loans to eight per cent. and on unsecured ones to 18 per cent. The Government sought to amend this to bring simple interest unto 10 per cent. and compound interest to seven per cent. A majority of the Urban party sided with the Government on this amendment but after a division the Government amendment was defeated by 34 to 33 votes. Undeterred by a defeat on this amendment, which was really in the nature of a *via media*, two members of the Urban party namely, *Raja Narendra Nath* and *Mr. Mukundlal Puri* moved a number of amendments which put both the simple and compound interest much higher than did the Government and although the Government again sided with the Urbanites all Urban amendments were defeated. *Raja Narendra Nath's* was defeated without a division and two of *Mr. Puri's* by 36 to 35 votes and again by 37 to 33 votes. The Government were thus concerned in three defeats in division and others without division.

Then the Rural party backed *Prof. W. Robert's* amendment limiting simple interest on secured and unsecured loans at four and eight per cent. respectively, above the prevailing bank rate. The Government remained neutral and the Rural amendment was carried by 37 to 9 votes.

Before the interest clause was taken up there was a compromise (brought about by the Government) in respect of amending sec. 74 of the Provincial Insolvency Act, the figure '2,000' suggested by the Government being accepted as between 1,000 and 3,000 suggested by Urbanites and Ruralites, respectively.

A series of divisions and canvassing of support for the respective parties during the debate on the interest clause kept the issue in suspense until the Rural amend-

ment was passed. In two divisions a member of the Urban party was literally dragged into the Rural lobby which led the President to request members not to exert undue influence in securing votes.

**13th. NOVEMBER :—**The Council, which yesterday linked the interest on loans made to agriculturists to the prevailing Bank rate (allowing the maximum an excess over the bank rate of two or five per cent., according as loans were secured or unsecured and interest was simple or compound) proceeded to-day to deal with another important provision in the Bill, namely Clause VI, which gives the proposed measure retrospective as well of prospective effect. This was stoutly opposed by Urban Members, but the clause was eventually passed.

When the Council commenced proceedings, the Finance Member, Mr. *Boyd*, moved a proviso to the interest Clause passed yesterday, providing that the maximum interest fixed therein shall not be deemed excessive in case of loans advanced by the Imperial Bank or any banking company registered under the Companies Act.

The Rural Party's amendment to the provision to omit the words, "Imperial Bank" therefrom and the Urban Party's (Mr. *Mukundlal Puri's*) amendment to add the words "insurance company" also, were both negatived. Mr. Puri demanded a division on his amendment, which was thrown out by 29 votes to 11, the Government remaining neutral. Another amendment of Mr. *Puri* adding a Sub-clause that no loan shall be considered secured, unless it is secured on first Mortgage was also lost and clause V was thereupon passed.

Clause VI, which provides for applicability of the Act to all suits pending on or instituted after the commencement of the Act (thereby giving it retrospective effect) gave rise to doubt on constitutional procedure, which was eventually solved by the Legal Remembrancer.

Mr. *Mukundlal Puri* moved an amendment that the Act should apply only to loans advanced after its coming into force.

The Rural Party's spokesman objected to the amendment on the ground it went against the spirit of the Bill, because it was ostensibly meant to relieve the burden of indebtedness and not to provide for a distant future, and as it killed the chief objective of the Bill under discussion, it could not be moved.

After the leader of the House had explained the Government's view, the President called on the Legal Remembrancer to solve the problem and he agreed with the leader of the House that the amendment was entirely within the scope of the Bill.

Mr. *Mukundlal Puri* recommended his amendment to the house on the ground that it was most unfair to brand the honest money-lender as an usurer, when he was charging 6 per cent compound interest, which was no more than what the Government of India and the Provincial Governments had themselves paid on their borrowings. He said that the reduction of rate was inequitable and its retrospective applications unjustifiable.

Mr. Puri's amendment was lost without a division, as also another of *Raja Narendranath* on similar lines, which meant to obviate the legal difficulties attendant on the making of the Act retrospectively effective, in view of the suits which were in appeal before higher tribunals having passed through lower courts. The original Clause VI was then passed.

Mr. Puri next moved three alternative amendments seeking to make the Act inapplicable to loans made to a trader, contractor or shopkeeper, or to a loan expressly borrowed for the purposes of trade or industry.

After various members had spoken, *Chaudhury Choturam's* motion for closure was passed by 56 votes to 10.

Mr. *Boyd*, speaking on behalf of the Government, said that they did not want to commit to themselves, especially as there had been so little time to go into the technicalities raised by the amendments, which were only handed in that morning. Mr. *Boyd* thought that the House should be given time to study the implications of the amendments.

The President took the sense of the House by show of hands. There was a tie, 25 members voting each way. Only ten minutes' time being now left, the President adjourned the House till Nov. 15.

**15th. NOVEMBER :—**Discussion was continued on Mr. *Mukundlal Puri's* amendments to restrict operations of the maximum interest clause, already passed, to the agriculturist classes and loans to be benefited thereunder to agricultural loans only.

The Council proceeded to discuss clauses relating to the constitution of conciliation boards, the object of which was to bring together the creditor and the debtor to effect a private compromise between them.

Generally speaking, the Government successfully resisted the amendments from the Rural side, as well as from the Urban side.

Rural Party members tried to widen the scope of the provisions, while the Urbanites attempted to restrict them in various ways.

Six different amendments (including one from Government) were placed before the House. Discussion on the amendments was proceeding, when the House adjourned.

**16th. NOVEMBER :—**Further progress was made with the Indebtedness Relief Bill in the Council to-day, when, after the disposal of clauses relating to the constitution of Conciliation Boards, details of their scope and limitations were discussed. The slow progress which the House was making with the Bill led the *President* to warn the House that unless some *via media* was struck to save time, he would be compelled to hold longer sessions. This question would be finally decided at the next sitting on the 19th.

The Government were concerned in two victories to-day. Firstly, siding with the Urban Party, they defeated by 43 votes to 23 the Rural Party amendment to fix the maximum jurisdiction of a Conciliation Board, respecting debt, at Rs. 25,000 in place of Rs. 10,000 as suggested by the Select Committee, and secondly with the Rural Party help they defeated by 24 votes to 12 the Urban Party amendment that at least one half of the members of the Conciliation Boards should be persons having five years' experience of administration of civil justice.

Their defeat in respect of Rs. 25,000 amendment mentioned above was the first reverse sustained in the present session by the Rural Party, which was the most powerful combination in the House and had been responsible for inflicting three successive defeats on the Government and the Urban Party combined a few days ago.

Speaking on this amendment, Mr. *Mukundlal Puri* accused Rural Party members of attempting to carry their exorbitant demands at the point of the bayonet and declared that the Government had shown itself incapable of withstanding the debtor's influence in the Council and things were being done at the dictation of Chaudhury Choturam, Leader of the Rural Party. He even visualised the time when those debtor influences might "come within the executive itself" and it was for that reason that they should have sufficient safeguards or do away with Conciliation Boards altogether. Urban Party members, however, were able to make little headway against the double opposition. The House then adjourned till 19th.

**19th. NOVEMBER :—**Some of the more controversial clauses (apart from the reduction of interest on debts with retrospective effect) such as the power of Conciliation Boards to pass decrees binding on creditors in certain circumstances and their validity as decrees of Civil Courts, were reached in the Council to-day. The attendance was thin but all parties were as vigilant and alert as ever about every single amendment. The Urban Party fought the proposed scope and powers of Conciliation Boards at every step.

Mr. *Labh Singh* had proposed at a previous sitting that a debtor making an application before a Conciliation Board for settlement of his debts should deposit with his application a sum equivalent to 25 per cent of the amount due from him. In order to increase the chances of acceptance of such a safeguard, from the urban point of view, Mr. M. L. Puri reduced the proposed percentage of deposits from 25 per cent to 10 per cent and moved an amendment to that effect. The Urbanites maintained that such precaution was necessary, if Conciliation Boards were to be business-like bodies. The Government, opposing both amendments, pointed out the difficulties of raising money before a settlement was reached. Both the amendments were thrown out.

The Government supported the amendment of the leader of the Urban Party *Rajn Narendranath*, providing that a Conciliation Board might, at any time, dismiss an application if it did not consider it desirable to attempt to effect a settlement. The amendment was carried, despite Rural opposition.



Clause 13 of the Bill was passed after some discussion and clauses 14, 15 and 16 were passed without any amendment.

Clause 17, which has been changed in some important respects by the Select Committee, gave rise to a keen debate. The original Bill had provided that a Conciliation Board could effect settlement if the debtor came to an amicable agreement with his creditors, to whom not less than 60 per cent of the total debts was due. The Select Committee, composed of a majority of Rural Party members, proposed that if a debtor came to an amicable settlement with "all or any of his creditors", the Board could effect a settlement and set forth the amounts payable to each creditor and the times at which they should be paid.

*Mr. Puri* moved an amendment seeking to restore the original provision regarding the necessity of debtors satisfying the creditors claiming at least 63 per cent of the total debts.

*Raja Narendranath*, supporting the amendment, visualised a debtor coming to a settlement with one creditor and thereby jeopardising the claims of the majority of his creditors.

*Mr. Boyd*, Finance Member, on behalf of the Government, explained how the change came to be made in the Select Committee and said that the Government had given notice of an amendment to clause 16 of the Bill, with a similar object.

*Mr. Puri* was prepared to go with the Government as far as the scaling down of debts through Conciliation Boards on any reasonable basis was concerned, but he asked what safeguard was there that collusive "settlement" between debtor and one of his creditors might not penalise all his other creditors? This clause might well lead to a debtor defrauding all but one of his creditors. How could they get their dues at all, if a debtor agreed, under the so-called single-creditor agreement, to hand over his assets to him for say 15 years?

*Mr. Boyd*, opposing the amendment, requested Urbanites to remember that Conciliation Boards would afford every reasonable chance to the creditors to safeguard themselves. The Board would not be composed of fools.

The amendment was lost.

To the same clause, which also provided that the agreement shall take effect as if it were a decree of a civil court, *Raja Narendranath* moved the addition of a proviso "that the agreement shall be executed regardless of the provisions of Section 16 of the Land Alienation Act" (which debars certain classes from coming into possession of agriculturists' lands).

The *President* first held that the amendment was out of order but later he allowed the amendment to be moved.

*Raja Narendranath* said that without such provision, the mere getting of a decree would be a farce and Boards will dismally fail in their objective.

*Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan*, Revenue Member, said that whether the amendment was in order or not, the Government could not agree to any restriction of the Land Alienation Act.

*Chaudhry Chotu Ram*, opposing on behalf of the Rural Party, thought that under this provision, 80 per cent of the small landholders would become expropriated in a short time and the present owners would be soon landless.

The amendment was lost.

The Rural Party then sustained two defeats in division, the Government and the Urban Party combining against them.

The first occasion was when the Government moved their promised amendment to clause 19 that before a debtor obtained a "certificate of reasonableness" from the Board, he shall satisfy at least 40 per cent of the creditor's claim. Although Urbanites had another amendment in favour of 60 per cent, they withdrew it and siding with the Government defeated the Rural Party in division by 35 votes to 26.

The next division was on the Urban party amendment that once a debtor's application was rejected by the Board no second application was permissible for three years.

Discussion on another important Urban party amendment that in case of a debtor's default in respect of the Board's decree, such amount shall be recoverable as arrear of land revenue was proceeding, when the Council adjourned.

**20th. NOVEMBER:—**When the Council continued discussion on the Debt Relief Bill to-day, the members of the Urban Party concentrated their energies



*inter alia* on getting the Government to assume responsibility for the realisation of decretal dues in the event of a debtor defaulting payment of the amount decreed by the Conciliation Board and making Conciliation Board's decisions the subject of appeal, which the Bill debars.

Both these efforts failed, as also their attempts to impose a time limit, firstly to the Conciliation Board's chapter itself and, secondly, to the retrospective nature of the measure. Thus the Government and the Rural Party were able to make further progress with ten more clauses, although in the teeth of the Urban opposition.

The urban spokesmen stressed the fact that there was a distinct provision in the corresponding Central Provinces Act whereby the Government assumed responsibility to recover defaulters' dues and maintained that it was unfair to leave a creditor at the mercy of a debtor, after compulsorily scaling down the debts and still give the debtor the benefit of the Land Alienation Act. Rural party members twitted the sponsors of the amendment, pointed out that they (the sponsors) claimed to stand as the vanguard of the movement for Swaraj and would be the friends of the masses, but here they were only seeking how to squeeze the poor ryot debtor, through the agency of the Government.

*Chaudhury Chotu Ram*, Leader of the Rural Party, opposing the Urban amendment in favour of the Government realisation of defaulter's debt as to arrears of land revenue, appealed to Hindu members to remember that among debtors, there were a number of small Hindu and Sikh landholders, who will be deprived of their ancestral property, if the Government were to have power to collect their debts, as though they were Government dues. He said that this was only a veiled attempt to get behind the Alienation Act, which was the Magna Charta of the Punjab Zemindars.

Replying to this, the mover of the amendment said that their ideas was only to invest the proceedings of the Boards with an element of reality and of potential efficacy, without which mere reduction of debt would serve no purpose. The amendment was lost. Similarly, the House decided that there should be no appeal from the Board's decrees.

*Mr. M. L. Puri* also proposed that court-fees on debt recovery proceedings should be limited to Rs. 10. He said that it was inconsistent on the part of the Government after professedly passing the measure to help debtors to continue to take a high percentage of the court fees on debt recovery proceedings, which, after successful decree, were either all to be borne by the debtor. The amendment was lost.

The Urbanties then pressed amendments seeking to limit the applicability of the Bill to loans advanced before 1932 and not to later debts and to fix the life of the Conciliation Boards till July 1936. They maintained that the Bill was an emergency measure admittedly brought to reduce the burden of the huge agriculturist debt and there was no necessity for placing on the Statute Book an Act of such far-reaching character for all time and questioned the wisdom of presenting the coming new legislature with such an enactment. All amendments were defeated.

Part four of the Bill was disposed of to-day and two more parts dealing with Damdupat (laying down that no debt shall ever be more than doubled under any circumstances through the accumulation of the debt) and with certain changes in the existing law remained to be passed. The Council then adjourned till the 23rd.

**23rd. NOVEMBER :—**A piquant situation arose in the Council to-day when discussion on part 5 of the Indebtedness Relief Bill relating to Damdupat was taken up. The Government wished to move a clause to be added to the Bill whereby they wished to define a debtor in a restricted agricultural sense. The leader of the Opposition, *Chaudhuri Choturam* on a point of order, objected on the ground that clause 7 of the Bill had already defined a debtor to include all classes and the attitude of the Rural Party was that the Bill should not be a class measure.

*Mr. Anderson*, Legal Remembrancer, on behalf of the Government, pointed out that the Government's original intention was to confine the Bill to agriculturists only, but now they wanted to put in this proviso in Part 5.

The President ruled the Government proposal out of order.

*Mr. Boyd* asked the President whether the amendment would be in order if the definition was made applicable only with respect to the section dealing with Damdupat and to previous sections.

The *President* deferred decision on this point and in the meanwhile took up Part 6, after the passage of which, gave a decision allowing the Government amendment, if it was applicable to Part 5 only. Discussion was then continued.

The amendments of the Rural Party seeking to define a debtor in their own way, firstly to make the clause applicable to the agriculturist tribes only and again to agriculturists and Depressed Classes were both defeated in divisions, the first by 37 votes to 22 and the second by 37 votes to 34.

Discussion then proceeded on the Government amendment which the *President* had allowed. *Choudhury Choturam* spoke for about an hour, when at about 6 p. m. the Finance Member Mr. *Boyd* drew the attention of the *President* to this, who said that the leader of the Party was not expected to deliberately obstruct the business of the House. Further discussion was postponed till the 26th.

**26th. NOVEMBER :—**By passing the first reading of the Indebtedness Relief Bill to-day, the Council concluded the initial stage of the enactment of a measure which had been the subject of interest all over the Province for more than two years and prototypes of which were on the anvil of other Provincial Legislatures.

Two divisions concerning the primary objective of the Bill enlivened to-day's proceedings when decision was taken on the issues of 'Damdupat' and possible dodges by creditors to circumvent the Bill itself.

At the outset the negotiations between the Rural Party members and the Government on the definition of a debtor failed, following which the Government yielded to this extent that they agreed to exclude from their agricultural definition of debtor, all persons proved to have greater income from other sources than from agriculture. Section 30 (proposed by the Government as an amendment) laid down 'Department' to mean that no Court shall grant decree in satisfaction of both principal and interest for a larger sum than twice the amount which the Court finds to have been due at the commencement of this Act. The Rural Party regarded this as a vital amendment and proposed that 'Damdupat' shall mean double the amount originally lent and not double the amount due at the commencement of the Act. Division resulted in a tie, 33 voting each way. Amidst cheers from members of the Urban Party, the *President* gave his casting vote against the amendment, on the ground that he would vote for the status quo, because the Government were proposing what the Select Committee recommended without any change.

*Mian Nurullah* (Rural) then moved the following proviso at the end, "provided that where a Court is satisfied that any fictitious sum was added to the sum actually advanced in order to circumvent the provisions of this Act the entire sum shall be disallowed".

The Government and Urbanites opposed the amendment as impracticable, inequitable and not within the spirit of the law, but Ruralites regarded it as the soul of the Bill and a division resulted in the Rural Party's favour by 34 votes to 32.

Rural Party members followed up their victory over Mr. *Nurullah's* amendment by another, freeing the defaulting debtor from all liability to arrest. The Bill as it emerged from the Select Committee contemplated certain circumstances in which a debtor defaulting payment of decree could be arrested, but the Rural Party members deleted all exceptions and when the Government and Urban Party combined in favour of total deletion of the clause on non-arrest as amended, Ruralites defeated them by 36 votes to 33.

The Government and Urbanites sustained yet another defeat in division on the rural amendment to the Civil Procedure Code, before the first reading was passed. The House then adjourned till the 30th.

**30th. NOVEMBER :—**The Council to-day passed the Indebtedness Relief Bill. At the outset, to-day, the leader of the House, *Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan*, suggested a late evening sitting, if necessary, so as to expedite the passing of the Bill, in view of which very few speeches were made. Among those who spoke opposing the Bill were *Pandit Nanakchand*, Mrs. *Lekhwati Jain* and Mr. *Mayadas*, Mr. *Mamraj Singh* and Mr. *Ramsaran Das* supported the Bill.

*Pandit Nanakchand* accused Zamindar members of combining to throttle the credit of the Province. He warned them that as a result of the measure, capital would fly to more hospitable areas and it would be the rural and agricultural population who would suffer most. Development of any kind would come to a standstill in those areas, because there was no satisfactory banking system to help

the cultivator. He foreshadowed that bad feeling and disturbed conditions in rural regions would follow in the wake of the enactment of the measure.

Mrs. *Lekhwati Jain* said that supporters of the Bill wished to ruin one class of the population, but their wishes would not be fulfilled. Instead of passing such a drastic measure, it would have been better if they had taught their agricultural brethren to cut down their extravagant expenditure in social customs. No prominent member of the Rural party spoke to-day. The House then adjourned till the 17th. December.

#### THE JOINT COMMITTEE REPORT DEBATE

**17th. DECEMBER :—**The Council met to-day to discuss the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report.

At the outset the Leader of the House, Sir *Sikandar Hyat Khan*, announced that the Indebtedness Relief Bill which had been sent back to the Council by His Excellency the Governor of the Punjab would be reconsidered on the 20th instant.

The *President* then announced that *Chaudhri Afzal Haq* would initiate the debate on the J. P. C. Report, because the Government motion that the Report be discussed was covered by Mr. Afzal Haq's motion.

Mr. *Chaudhri Afzal Haq* thereupon moved that the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee did not satisfy the aspirations of Indians and be rejected. He strongly criticised the proposals in the Report with regard to Services, Governor's powers and provisions of Ministers and declared that the pledge, with regard to Dominion Status, given by both Lord Irwin and the Prime Minister had virtually been repudiated. He described the position of Ministers as one of disgrace vis-a-vis the Services and said that Ministers would be powerless before them.

Mr. Afzal Haq's remarks were frequently questioned by official benches who challenged him to quote relevant portions from the Report, but Mr. Afzal Haq stuck to his position and invited the Government to repudiate his arguments. He maintained that the Report was only fit to be rejected.

*Khan Bahadur Sardar Habibullah* then moved an amendment that whereas the scheme of constitution outlined in the report definitely falls short of the pledges given by His Majesty's Government, and does not satisfy the Indian aspirations, it should be declared inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing.

*Sardar Habibullah*, supporting his motion, said that he could not understand the meaning of the rejection of the report. He thought that all parties in the House, not excluding Government members, would have no hesitation in voting for his motion. He maintained that the pledges given by British statesmen had been thrown to the winds. He recalled that Lord Willingdon had said only the other day that he had the full authority of the British Government to say that the goal of the British mission in India was to give her Dominion Status. He described the present scheme as goalless and soulless and was so reactionary in character that it would not satisfy anybody. He was certain that from one end of the country to the other, every party, whether it was Nationalist, Congress, Moderate or otherwise, every politician whether Hindu, Muslim or Christian, had described the scheme as unsatisfactory. He said that there was too much suspicion and mistrust in the provisions of the scheme. He criticised the powers given to the Governor-General and Governors as exceeding even those held by some European dictators. But whereas these dictators were chosen by the people themselves, dictators under the J. P. C. scheme would be thrust upon the people. Criticising the position of Ministers *Sardar Habibullah* asked, "Will their powers be more or less than now?"

The Government benches: "More, certainly more."

*Sardar Habibullah* challenged this view and said, "You would be satisfied if even one member said so." He was personally convinced that their position would be worse off under the so-called Provincial Autonomy than at present. Even the least member of the Services could go straight to the Governor over the Minister's head.

The Revenue Member, Sir *Sikandar Hyat Khan*, who next addressed the House, was listened by the House and packed galleries with close attention. Sir *Sikandar* prefaced his remarks by saying that he had nothing but praise for a Nation who could hand over their own powers to subject races, but his complaint was that they did not do it with that degree of generosity which would immediately win for them the regard and co-operation of those who were prepared to give it. Attacking the Safeguards, he instanced the case of Ireland where, he said, that by parting with a little power, they had only created trouble for themselves.

Sir *Sikandar Khan* said that distrust and suspicion were the root cause of all troubles. He instanced the loyalty of Indian Ministers in Bengal where terrorism was looked upon as such an important subject. Why then did they hedge Ministers' powers in future as though they could not be trusted to do things properly?

When Sir *Sikandar* was referring to the relations of the Indian Civil Service and Ministers, Sir *Jogendra Singh*, Minister for Agriculture, rose up and said that he could assure the House that the relations between Ministers and I. C. S. officers were marked by the closest operation and complete harmony and when Sir *Sikandar* retorted: "You are not the only Minister," Sir *Jogendra Singh* added, "I am speaking on behalf of all Ministers." (Cheers.)

Sir *Sikandar Hyat Khan* appealed to them to face facts like practical men and divorce their thoughts from mere idealism. He referred to those who would not be satisfied with anything less than "Complete Independence" and said that it was impossible to convince them that what they desired was unattainable, except by physical force, which was unthinkable. He said that in taking stock of the existing condition and visualising the future development promised by the J. P. C. it would be helpful to make a comparison with the past. He said that two prominent phases of their history during the last 1,000 years were internecine warfare and foreign aggression; they were either fighting among themselves or had been ruled by others. Even if it were possible for India to turn out the British bag and baggage, there was no guarantee of continuance of peaceful and prosperous conditions or that they would not lapse to chaos and anarchy. He counselled moderation to extremists in India as well as in England and warned the latter that their attempt to thwart the legitimate claims of Indians would have only one effect, namely engender bitterness and hostility against Britain.

Sir *Sikandar* described the safeguards as mere constitutional checks which were there in every constitution, whether written explicitly or unwritten as in England, but they would never be used so long as responsible Ministries functioned for the benefit of the people. They must be there to protect the Provinces from the consequence of Ministers' inability or ineptitude to the Government, which might conceivably take the form of disorder and chaos. Sir *Sikandar* concluded, "I may not be here when the new constitution is ushered in. My parting advice to my Muslim brethren is that they should try, by every possible means, to secure the goodwill and confidence of the Minorities. My appeal to Hindu and Sikh brethren is that they should throw off suspicion and distrust and join hands with their Muslim fellow countrymen in the service of the Province and the country." (Applause.)

*Sardar Sampuran Singh* (delegate to the Round Table Conference) condemned the Communal Award and said that this "Award" was only a decision or an order of the Prime Minister who was never given the role of arbitrator and since the "Award" was the basis of recommendations they were equally unsatisfactory to them.

Mr. *Nanakehand* supported *Sardar Habibullah* and suggested modifications, at the same time paying a tribute to the Joint Parliamentary Committee for their sincerity and labour. The debate at this stage was adjourned.

**18th. DECEMBER:**—By fourteen to five votes, the Council, after two days' lively debate on the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report, passed the following amended motion of Mr. *Chaudhri Afzal Haq*, Government members remaining neutral:

"That in the opinion of this Council, the Report of the Parliamentary Committee does not satisfy the aspirations of India."

*Sardar Habibullah's* alternative motion, "whereas the scheme of constitution outlined in the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee definitely falls short of the pledges given by His Majesty's Government and does not satisfy the Indian aspirations in the opinion of this House, it is inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing" was rejected by 25 votes to 14.

Mr. *Boyd*, Finance Member, made a strong plea for acceptance of the constitution outlined by the Select Committee. He refuted the suggestion that the proposed constitution was a "goalless and soulless" scheme and said that the goal had been laid down in the Act of 1919 and there was no intention to repudiate it. He said the new constitution was a free gift of responsible government. This gift was not



the result of agitation but was the result of sacrifices and services rendered by the sons of India in the Great War.

After referring to various criticisms levelled against the J. P. C. proposals. Mr. Boyd said that all misunderstanding was due to the circumstances in which the Report was written. He maintained that the contemplated constitution was a great advance and should be worked whole-heartedly. As regards the safeguards the Finance Member thought that without them the constitution would be like a train passing over a river over which there was no safe bridge. The constitution was fully workable, because of the safeguards, in the absence of which minority communities would be ruined. The special powers of the Governor would seldom be used, if past experience was any indication of the future. Talking of his own province, Mr. Boyd said that Indian members had always acted with great reasonableness and had always tried to work with Government.

Several speakers, including the two Ministers, Sir *Jogendra Singh*, Minister for Agriculture and Sir *Feroze Khan*, Minister for Education, supported the J. P. C. Report.

Sir *Jogender Singh* said that his experience as Minister had dispelled his early fears. He thought that the proposed constitution could be worked satisfactorily if the different communities supported their Ministers.

Sir *Feroze Khan*, who was continually interrupted by Urban and Rural members, enumerated the merits of the scheme. He said that we should make a nation of ourselves and not expect a foreign nation to make us a nation.

A voice: "Through separate electorates?"

Sir *Feroze Khan* appealed to the House to work for solidarity and cast away everything that made for dissension.

Mrs. *Lekhwati Jain* (Congressite) attacked the Report in bitter terms. She said that there was nothing in it. She warned the Government that they had deliberately side-tracked from the issue of Dominion Status and were giving something which was neither complete Provincial Autonomy nor Self-Government. She predicted that when Britain would be ready to grant Dominion Status, India would probably kick it off and insist on Purna Swaraj. As regards the centre, she thought that the present nominated block of 40 members in a house of 140 was preferable to the proposed block of 125 States' representatives in the Federal Legislature, who would be mere puppets in the hands of the Government.

Two amendments were moved to Mr. *Afzal Haq's* motion. One was that the resolution should read at the end, "The Report does not satisfy the aspirations of Indians and is rejected." The other amendment was that the words after Indians should be deleted.

Both these amendments were accepted and Mr. *Afzal Haq's* motion, thus amended was carried. *Sardar Habibullah's* motion to substitute his amendment was lost.

#### PUNJAB INDEBTEDNESS RELIEF BILL

**21st. DECEMBER:—**The Council adjourned *sine die* to-day after incorporating the changes in the Indebtedness Bill suggested by the Governor with one minor addition to the clause relating to the arrest of a judgment-debtor. This was sponsored by the Government themselves, who, it was understood, had come to an understanding with the Rural Party. The latter did not, therefore, move their amendments and the Government amendments were carried, defeating the Urban Party amendments regarding the interest clause, etc.

The clause regarding arrest was modified to secure immunity from arrest in so far as a debtor's inability to pay arose from property which cannot be disposed of by a civil court decree. This afforded protection for the mere agriculturist.

Mr. *Mukundlal Puri* condemned, in scathing terms, the Government's new amendment adding two more provisos to the arrest clause. These two provisos which are safeguards for agriculturist judgment debtors and which replace the second proviso in the clause on arrest, run as follows: "Provided further that when a court has power, under law, to order temporary alienation of land of the judgment-debtor in the execution of a decree, the court shall not for the purpose of this section, take into account the value of any such temporary alienation in considering the capacity of the judgment-debtor to pay; provided further that, save in so far as is otherwise provided in this section, the Court, in considering the capacity of a judgment-debtor to pay, shall take into consideration the value of the property of the judgment-debtor only to the extent to which the civil court can dispose of it, under the law in execution of the decree."



Mr. Puri said that he would have preferred the abolition of arrest altogether (as was provided in the Bill as returned by the Governor) rather than give benefit only to agriculturists. The result of this would be that members of the agriculturist classes would be immune from arrest and by this amendment the Government would be wiping out the entire debt due from agriculturists. Mr. Puri pointed out the anomaly of a zamindar owning 10,000 acres of land, but refusing to pay even Rs. 500, who would still be not liable to arrest.

After the Bill was passed, Sir *Sikandar Hyat Khan*, Leader of the House, said this was the last session of the Council he would attend before taking up his new appointment at Delhi as Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank and he took this opportunity of offering his sincere and heartfelt gratitude for the uniform courtesy and support he had received from every section of the House. He hoped that he might come back to the Punjab again. (Cheers.)

*Raja Nerendranath*, on behalf of the Urban Party, *Choudhuri Choturam* on behalf of the Rural Party, Mr. C. C. Garbett, Chief Secretary, *Sardar Sir Jogendra Singh*, Minister for Agriculture, *Sardar Buta Singh*, Deputy President and the President, Sir *Shahabuddin*, all joined in paying tributes to Sir Sikandar and wishing him success in his new field and early return to the Punjab.

Mr. Garbett described Sir *Sikandar* as a brilliant administrator and particularly mentioned his capacity for sustained hard work. The President described him as one of the ablest men in the Punjab and his absence would be a great loss to the province.

The Council then adjourned *sine die*.

## The N. W. Frontier Legislative Council

AUTUMN SESSION—PESHAWAR—2nd to 8th NOVEMBER 1934

### REDEMPTION OF MORTGAGES BILL

The Autumn Session of the N. W. Frontier Legislative Council commenced at Peshawar on the 2nd. November 1934. After discussion lasting for two hours, the Council referred to a Select Committee the *Usurious Loans (North-West Frontier) Amendment Bill* and the *Redemption of Mortgages Bill* and to report thereon at the beginning of next budget session.

Dilatory tactics, by making long speeches in discussing specific provisions by Hindu Members, called for the Chair's ruling imposing a limitation and members were told that they could not go beyond discussing the underlying principle of the Bill at the present stage.

### USURIOUS LOANS BILL

Sparking on the Usurious Loans Bill, Mr. *Ishwardas* criticised the arbitrary and unscientific definition of excessive interest and analysed the factors that determined it. He agreed that something should be done to check the alarming increase of agricultural indebtedness but attributed the agriculturists' miseries to falling prices, lack of marketing facilities and absence of industries, Government's revenue policy and the defective currency policy. The speaker sympathised with the efforts to reduce the excessive rate of interest, but did not agree that the method adopted was reasonable and practicable. He suggested to the Government to approach the Government of India and raise a loan and invest it in the Land Mortgage Banks and appoint a Conciliation Board to relieve agricultural indebtedness. Mr. *Runciman* and Mr. *Ladharam* characterised it as differential legislation contending that the law should be equal for all.

The Council passed supplementary demands for the current year including Rs. 1,05,000 capital outlay on Hydro-Electric schemes and Rs. 11,000 for broadcasting.

## REGULATION OF ACCOUNTS BILL

On the *Finance Member's* motion, the Council referred to the Select Committee the regulation of Accounts Bill to report thereon by the beginning of the next budget session. He said that the Government wanted to give the Select Committee the fullest opportunity to study opinions received.

Hindu members advocated total rejection of the measure, which they termed communal.

After the presentation of the Select Committee report on the *Legal Practitioner's Bill*, the Council adjourned.

## CORRUPTION IN FRONTIER ADMINISTRATION

**5th. NOVEMBER :—**The *Finance Member* made a statement intimating the Government's intention to appoint a Committee with a majority of elected members of Council to enquire into the prevalence of corruption in the various departments of the administration and to suggest measures to check the same. The Finance Member hoped the Opposition would assist them in their work.

The statement was made on the non-official resolution moved by Mr. *Habibullah Khan*, recommending the appointment of such a Committee. The mover congratulated the Inspector-General of Police on the efforts made to eradicate the evil and urged similar efforts by other departments.

## LEGAL PRACTITIONERS' AMEND. BILL

**7th. NOVEMBER :—**The Council passed the demands for excess grants for 1932-33 to regularise the expenditure actually incurred in excess over the voted grants.

The House passed without discussion an official bill enforcing the provisions of the *Legal Practitioners Act of 1879* with all the up-to-date amendment in the Frontier. The *Finance Member* said that the bill aimed at the control of the status of legal practitioners.

## THE SHARIAT BILL

**8th. NOVEMBER :—**The Council passed the non-official Bill extending the elective elements to the Notified Area Committee.

After four hour's discussion, which H. E. the Governor watched, the Council circulated for eliciting public opinion the non-official Bill enforcing Islamic Law of Shariat inheritance and other rights of women. Government's neutrality in religious matters was explained by Mr. *Cunningham*, the Finance Member, who for the first time addressed the Council in Urdu. The Council then adjourned *sine die*.

## SPECIAL SESSION—PESHAWAR—21st and 22nd DECEMBER 1934

## THE JOINT COMMITTEE REPORT DEBATE

Two days' special session of the Frontier Council, convened to discuss the Joint Parliamentary Committee's report, opened with thin non-official attendance, the progressive Ministerial party being poorly represented. *Khan Bahadur Abdul Gafoor Khan* presided.

*Mr. Cunningham*, leader of the House, moved : 'This Council do now proceed to discuss the report of the Parliamentary Joint Select Committee on Indian constitutional reforms'.

He said that it was a matter whereon the Government desire to give the members an opportunity to express their views without either side attempting to secure a victory. The representations made by the members will be forwarded to proper quarters but the Government did not intend to enter the arena of the debate. Mr. *Cunningham* anticipated that the final form of the Bill would depart materially from the proposals of the Committee.

*Malik Khuda Bakhsh*, leader of the Opposition, initiating the discussion expressed gratitude to the Government for giving them an opportunity to express their opinion on momentous issues but unless their criticism was taken into consideration the discussion was futile. After tracing the constitutional progress and development of Indian aspirations for self-government, he subjected the report to detailed criticism in the light of two axioms—firstly, that good Government was no substitute for self-government and secondly that constitutional progress should aim at Government of the people and for the people. Concluding he could read through the lines

a single principle underlying the report, viz., Indians being incapable of assuming effectively responsibility to carry on the Government. Therefore, there should be one individual with extensive powers whose appointment should be beyond the ambit of Indians' power and as long as he did not possess special powers Government could not continue. Analysing provincial autonomy, the speaker said that unless ultimate authority was vested in an elected body self-government was a misnomer and it was insult to intelligence to believe that it was self-government. The details of the scheme which was repugnant to the very spirit of democracy had been worked keeping in view the salient feature of the one man rule in spite of the popular wishes. Touching special responsibilities of the Governor, he said that every branch of administration was included in the all-comprehensive list. There might have been some committee or even nominated members to advise him when he took over the responsibility for the entire administration in the event of a break-down.

To Mr. Khuda Bakhsh's mind these safeguards were liable to afford to the Governor, if he was not benevolent or efficient, opportunities to find some sort of pretext for a break-down of the scheme. They were entering an era full of danger and suspicion. If the British wanted to convince them that the safeguards were in the interest of India there must be some drastic modifications in the report. Centralization of power was the keynote underlying the committee's recommendations. What was given by the hand was taken with interest by the other. He also criticised the appointment of a non-member of the Council as Minister saying that the White Paper in this respect was more liberal. Alluding to the sphere of action of the Minister he said that the transfer of law and order which had been reluctantly conceded was a misnomer. A real transfer could be only when a person who had power was also confided in. The Governor's special staff sitting over and above the Ministers did not seem to him consistent with the real transfer of power. He criticised the provision for the Governor's Act and ordinance-making power alleging that provincial autonomy was being nullified at every stage. Objecting to the provision for non-votable expenditure some of which will not be open to discussion he said that the present Council was competent to reduce the Minister's salary, etc. which power was being taken away. The speaker was cheered when he advocated the cause of Baluchistan for reform and the Frontier's claims for a subvention according to the Haig Committee's recommendations. Referring to the Centre, he criticised the reservation of defence and external affairs, continued recruitment of all-India services by the Secretary of State and indirect election to the Lower House of the Federal Legislature which removed touch with the voters.

*Nawab Hamidullah* justified the proposals of the Joint Select Committee for India's constitutional advance which were framed after the mature deliberation and closest consultation of all the parties concerned. He was gratified that the Muslim demands were met to a great extent and advised the House to accept the proposals of the committee which were fair advance on the present state of things.

*Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan*, in a short maiden speech, also expressed satisfaction over the recommendations of the committee inasmuch as the demand of the Frontier for equal status was fully met and no discrimination was made against the people of this province. He endorsed the proposal for the transfer of law and order whereby Indians were made responsible for the peace and tranquillity of the province and commended the provision of the Governor's Acts and ordinance-making power which ensured against the risks of a breakdown of the scheme.

**22nd. DECEMBER :—**Mr. *Peer Bakhsh* (Independent) protested against the retrograde and undemocratic nature of the report and subjected the commercial safeguards to adverse criticism and thought that the transfer of responsibility at the centre without financial control would leave the Ministers helpless in departmental administration. They could better have said that future India would be governed by the Secretary of State through the instrumentality of Parliament with the assistance of the Governor-General and it was no use wasting all this labour, time and money to produce a report which was not worth the trouble taken in writing. Absolute distrust and lack of confidence pervaded the whole scheme of provincial autonomy, while the princes' block under the proposed federation would be more conservative than the present official block.

Mr. *S. Hassan Ali* (Progressive) endorsing the recommendations congratulated the Committee on their honest and sincere endeavours to produce a constitution which was best in the circumstances when the Congress was placing obstacles in the

way of constitutional advancement. He felt that certain of the Governor's special powers will be sparingly used as shown by the present constitution under which the Governor too possessed extensive powers which had not been abused. The same was likely to happen in the future. He advised the House to accept the proposed advance and fight for more rights which were bound to be conceded as they proved their fitness to manage their own affairs. He regretted that communal wrangles and internal dissensions made it incumbent on the Committee to recommend the tightening of the safeguards.

*Khan Bahadur Abdul Rahim*, Deputy President, charging England with bankruptcy of statesmanship asked a straight question, whether political expedience and wisdom convinced them that India would keep silent and content. Criticising the proposed scheme of provincial autonomy, he referred to the position of future Ministers who would be kicked like a football by the Opposition on one side and the Governor on the other. Objecting to the Federation plan he urged the imposition of a condition on the States entering the Federation that they would introduce representative Government in their States and regretted that they would be left to the mercy of the conservative Princes. Touching the subvention proposal he maintained that it was a downright insult to this administration that the subvention should be subject to the vote of the central legislature and thought that the greatest injustice had been done to Baluchistan which had been expunged from the constitutional programme without reason.

*Sir Abdul Qayum Khan*, Minister, speaking as an elected member recalled his press statement that the report had fallen short of the Indian aspirations, adding that it was very disappointing and bred distrust. Some of the safeguards, with which provincial autonomy was hedged in, were unnecessary and redundant, but nothing better could be expected under the circumstances prevailing in the country where it was difficult to find a solution of the conflicting interests. Recalling Round Table Conference deliberations in which he had participated, he said that every opportunity had been given them to patch up their differences but they failed resulting in a setting back of the clock as suggested by the leader of the Opposition. The Minister advised his countrymen to be patient in finding a solution which was only possible by creating mutual trust and mutual help. Considering the internal dissensions, they should not grudge this little delay. He emphasized the progress made since the advent of the British, contrasting it with the social conditions in Hindu India. Touching the subject of provincial autonomy, he hoped that the framers of the Constitution Act would yet reduce some of the safeguards and thought that if the Governor had power of suspending the constitution he need not have the power of making extraordinary Acts which privilege might be confined to the Governor-General. The speaker did not see harm in the Frontier Governor's special responsibility for the trans-border area. The failure to make the proposed subvention a statutory charge on the central revenues, was a real disappointment for Sir Abdul Qayum who did not see any justification for reducing the Haig Committee's future.

*Rai Sahib Mehr Chand Khanna*, on behalf of the Frontier minorities, paid a tribute to Lord Linlithgow, chairman of the Committee, which had produced a document of far-reaching importance. He could not join hands with those who urged whole-sale rejection but favoured drastic modifications saying that blaming others for their sins would be nothing short of self-deception. He alleged that the whole fabric of the report was based on communal electorate. The Government had been ever-anxious to placate the Muslims by separating Sind. The speaker felt gratified at the minorities' safeguards which in the present state of affairs served their best interest against the exploitation by the majority and abuse of power. Voicing the fears of Frontier minorities under the new reforms when the official block would be removed, leaving them to the mercy of 76 per cent. of the majority, the Rai Sahib endorsed the Governor's special powers which could only be useful, if applied on the proper occasion in the interest of those for whom they were intended. Why could not the Government appoint special officers for the minorities' protection? He thought that the subvention was perhaps a necessity so long as the Frontier remained a separate province, but he did not favour making it a statutory charge.

*Mr. Abdul Qayum Khan* (Independent), alleged that the Committee's proposals were a scandal on English statesmanship and the proposed reforms were absolutely inadequate but they must not expect anything from the British nation.

The Council then adjourned *sine die*.

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# The Burma Legislative Council

AUTUMN SESSION—RANGOON—8th to 14th AUGUST 1934

## MOTION FOR REMOVAL OF PRESIDENT

The Autumn Session of the Burma Legislative Council commenced at Rangoon on the 8th. August 1934. After formal business, the Council refused leave to *U Ba Shwe* to move a no-confidence motion in the Ministry as a body and on the *Education Minister* and *Forest Minister* individually, the maximum number voting in favour of the motion, including the mover, being only three.

*U. Ba Chaw* next moved for the removal of the President, *Sir Oscar De Glanville* from the office. The mover and others who spoke for the motion, pointed out the President's 'inadequate knowledge' of the Burmese language, his rejection of resolutions of the same nature that were admitted by former Presidents, and his alleged partiality in calling on to speak those whose names he knew and his alleged disregard of requests made by members regarding arrangements on the agenda paper.

The *Finance Member* reminded the House that the President's Office was in the nature of a judicial officer; as such insecurity of tenure of office during the lifetime of the Council on far-fetched frivolous grounds disabled him from performing his functions. He refuted the allegations regarding the partiality and said the President was perfectly in order in rejecting certain resolutions. Members could seek explanations from the President for such action. Regarding his inadequate knowledge of the Burmese language the speaker pointed out the President had a Burmese staff to whom he could refer when in doubt. He warned the House if the doctrine of impartiality was to be thrown overboard and somebody put in the Chair who could be influenced by party considerations it would amount to disenfranchisement of minorities.

The *President* explained the procedure in respect of admission of resolutions. He referred to the Council rules regarding transaction of business in English, though he could permit members to address the Council in Burmese and other vernaculars used in the province.

The House divided and the motion was carried by fifty against thirty-two, the two Ministers voting with the Government, while most of the members of their parties voted for the motion. *Sir J. A. Maung Gyi's* party remained neutral. It may be recalled in the last budget session a similar motion was defeated by a narrow margin.

## PROTEST AGAINST GOVERNOR'S ACTION

**9th. AUGUST :—**In the Council to-day the *President* ruled out an adjournment motion notice of which had been given up by five members in connection with the hunger-strike of *Shin Ariya* in the Mandalay jail. He pointed out that there was ample time to tackle resolutions which privilege was not made use of. He also quoted a ruling of *U Pu*, a former President, himself a Burman Buddhist, on a motion of similar nature in connection with the hunger-strike of *U Wiziya*, disallowing the same. He emphasized that this kind of motion involved an action of the Government and a detailed reply had already been given by the Home Member replying to a question. On enquiry the President elicited from the Home Member that *Shin Ariya* was sentenced on June 15 to three months' imprisonment and his life was in no way in danger.

The Council resuming after lunch, the *President* read the Governor's communication to the Council, withholding his concurrence with the motion passed yesterday removing *Sir Oscar de Glanville* from the office as President. His Excellency dilated on the nature of duty and responsibility attached to the office of the President and pointed out that after a careful examination of the report of the speeches he found that the complaints were mainly the outcome of ignorance and misunderstanding of rules. His Excellency could not also hold alleged insufficiency of



Burmese knowledge as reasonable or sufficient ground for the removal of the President.

At 3-35 p. m. when an amendment to a non-official resolution was being discussed by the House, *U Saw* moved a motion that the business of the House be adjourned to enable the members to discuss outside the situation arising withholding his concurrence to the removal of the President.

The *President* ruled out the motion, stating that there was never such a precedent and if the members desired to discuss the situation outside they could do so when the Council usually adjourned. Moreover, he had nothing to say on matters that were to be discussed outside the House.

Thereupon all Burmese members excepting seven walked out as a protest against the ruling of the President. The House then continued usual business and adjourned.

#### UNRULY SCENES—MEMBERS WALK-OUT

**10th. AUGUST :—**For the first time in the history of the Council, disorderly scenes were witnessed this afternoon, when Burmese members tried to obstruct the business of the House, as a protest against the Governor's decision.

When the Council was about to continue discussion on a non-official resolution, *U. Saw* (Peoples' Party) stood up and said: "Here is a letter for you, Mr. President".

*President*: "Please sit down. *U. Saw*". *Sir Oscar* then explained that the House was discussing a resolution. Therefore, the Council business could not be interrupted but if *U. Saw* wanted to read the letter he could do so the next day after question time.

*U. Saw*, ignoring the order of the President, read: "We, the undersigned members of the Burma Legislative Council, having no confidence in you, call upon you to resign from the office of the President of the Council".

When the letter was being read out, members in the official bloc and some European and Indian members protested shouting "Order, order".

Meanwhile, Burmese members went on banging tables and shouting "Shame shame". "President you must resign".

After the letter had been read, *U. Ba Thein* (*U. Chit Hlaing's party*) and *U Ba Thawng* (*Dr. Ba Maw's party*) read some of the names of the signatories to the letter, while *U Ba Chaw* made uncomplimentary remarks against the President. The *President* requested the aforesaid four members to withdraw from the Council for the rest of the day, under Council rules, but the members did not withdraw until the President had asked them twice.

Immediately after their withdrawal all Burmese members, excepting nine, walked out but continued loitering in the lobby. The House then continued its usual business. A few minutes latter, when the resolution in the possession of the House was put to vote, a number of Burmese members, who had retired into the lobby, shouted "Ayes" from outside.

The letter addressed to the *President* was signed by over 52 members of *U Chit Hlaing's party*, *Dr. Ba Maw's Party* and the People's Party, signatories including one Indian Member, *Mr. Ganga Singh*, two ex-Ministers, of whom one was *U. Kyaw Din*, ex-Education Minister, on whom a motion of "no-confidence" was passed during the last session of the Council.

#### PRESIDENT'S CONDUCT CRITICISED

**11th. AUGUST :—**Consequent on yesterday's disorderly scenes in the Council a strong posse of civil and military police were posted this morning outside the Council hall as precautionary measures. The Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner of Police, were also present. When the House resumed session the attendance of Burmese members was very poor but they were in the lobbies. On two occasions they participated in voting and pressed to division two Government motions which were lost by a heavy majority.

Shortly before adjournment of the House, a letter under the signatures of 52 Burmese members, Messrs. *Ganga Singh* and *Tilla Mahomed Khan*, urging the President to resign his office as they had no confidence in him was handed over to the President through the Secretary of the Council.

There was no disorder in the Council to-day. It was understood *U Maung Gyi*, *U Kyaw Din*, *U Chit Hlaing*, and *U Mya*, representatives of the four Opposition groups, had interviews with the Governor this morning by invitation in connection

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## PRESIDENT'S CONDUCT CRITICISED

with the situation as a sequel to the passing of the motion for removal of the President and the Governor's decision thereon.

**13th. AUGUST :—**Strong resentment by continuously banging the tables was expressed to-day in the Council by a large number of Opposition members for allowing the civil and military police to come inside the precincts of the Council on Saturday. Ironical cheers followed by cross questions between the Chair and members of the Opposition marked the proceedings of the day besides the suspension of two members. Civil and military police were also posted to-day outside the Council hall. To-day was a non-official day but members declined to move their respective resolutions. Consequently the Council adjourned.

Two adjournment motions one to pass a vote of censure on the Government for misusing the civil and military police force by placing them at the disposal of the President on August 11 and 13 and another to discuss the situation arising out of the President's action on Saturday in calling the police and posting them in different places within the Council buildings including the lobbies and thereby casting aspersions on members and lowering the dignity of the House were disallowed by the President who explained that under the Council rules the house could not discuss such things as well as the President's action which was done to preserve law and order. In this connection he quoted how *U. Chit Hlaing* when he was President once called in the police to preserve law and order, *U. H. C. Khoo*, chief whip of the People's party asked the President to permit him to make a statement on behalf of *U. Chit Hlaing's*, *Ba Maw's* and his own party. Permission was refused and this was followed by a series of points of order, personal explanations and questions by the Chair. The President explained why he refused to consent to read out the letter he addressed to leaders and whips of the Opposition parties on Saturday. The letter gives reasons how under the Council rules the President was justified in taking help of the police to maintain law and order. It inter alia says that the President was visited by *U. Kyaw Din* and Dr. *Ba Maw*, Education Minister who suggested for him that his proper course in arranging to carry out his duties under the Council rules was to consult leaders of the parties that took part in the regrettable disorder on Saturday. The President was unable to agree with that view but in the course of conversation he was assured by both *U. Kyaw Din* and *U. Ba Maw* that they would endeavour to assist him in preserving order. *U. Kyaw Din* and Dr. *Ba Maw* denied the statement addressed to them by the President and said they only explained to the President that it would have been better for him to consult party leaders who have seen that peace and order was kept before he had taken police help.

The President thereupon called on Mr. *Ganga Singh* to move his resolution which was first on the agenda. Mr. *Ganga Singh* said: 'I do not wish to move my resolution as I have no confidence in you.' The President asked him more than twice to withdraw from the House but he remained seated and was cheered and applauded by the Burmese members and voices of 'don't withdraw, don't withdraw'. The President suspended Mr. *Ganga Singh* for the rest of the day. *U. Tha Gyaw* expressed that he was not moving his resolution as the parties had no confidence in the President. *U. Saw* also did not move his resolution on the same grounds as those stated by others. The President suspended *U. Saw* for the rest of the session this being his second offence during the session. When the President on adjourning the Council was leaving the House a large number of Burmese members of *U. Chit Hlaing's*, People's and Dr. *Ba Maw's* parties remained seated as a protest against the President's action.

Four representatives of the Opposition groups, who had an interview with the Governor on Saturday, in a letter to the Governor protested against the posting of a large police in the parlour of the Council on a requisition of the President. The letter pointed out that the course adopted by the President was not only derogatory to the dignity of the House but offended their self-respect. The members said that the contention that the aid of 120 to 200 policemen was called in to protect the President from personal violence was idle and groundless.

**14th. AUGUST :—**A novel way of defying the Chair was adopted to-day at the Council by the Opposition members of *U. Chit Hlaing's*, Dr. *Ba Maw's* and People's parties when they altogether refrained from entering the Council Chamber. Civil and military police were withdrawn today and no extra-ordinary precautions were taken.

After interpellations, the *President* said he had received a letter signed by 55 members requesting him to resign as the Council had passed a resolution of no-confidence in him. The *President* remarked that his duty was perfectly clear and therefore he should not resign.

Asked by Mr. *M. M. Rafi*, the *President* gave the ruling that a member suspended for the session is debarred from entering not only the chamber but the Council precincts as Council included the whole premises.

Not only the retrenchment report discussions but all the resolutions lapsed, the members being absent, excepting that moved by Sir *Joseph Maung Gyi* recommending to the Government to appoint a committee of the House to enquire and report how the office of the Council should be made independent of any Government control and reorganised. The *Home Member* said Government would participate in the discussion. The resolution was passed unopposed.

The Council agreed, on the motion of the *Home Member*, to extend the time by which the Select Committees on two *Burma Village Amendment Bills* were instructed to report, till the first day allotted to non-official business at the next session of the Council. The *President* then read the orders of the Governor *proroguing* the Council.

# The Assam Legislative Council

AUTUMN SESSION—SHILLONG—17th. to 22nd. SEPTEMBER 1934

Opening the autumn session of the Assam Legislative Council at Shillong on the 17th. September 1934, *His Excellency Sir Michael Keane* reviewed the position of the province from several standpoints.

Referring to the criticisms regarding the extension of the life of the Council he pointed out that five years was not an extravagant period, that it was the period foreshadowed in the White Paper for future legislative councils and that seven years was the period contemplated for the provinces with Upper Chambers. Now that the Constitution Bill would become law in the near future he believed that most people would admit that a general election was not at this stage worth the expense and harrassment involved and that the reasons behind the decision to extend the life of the Council were sound, fair and disinterested.

*His Excellency* was glad that the province was entirely peaceful and undisturbed and said that the powers which the Council gave the Government by passing the Assam Criminal Law Amendment Act last session had been used with caution and it seemed that Government measures to deal with terrorist activities had met with general approval for their complete eradication. *His Excellency* thought that something more than penal laws were required in order to ensure this.

He next referred to the influence of homes and schools on the young people. 'If young people are allowed freely to hear conversations that border on disloyalty and to read papers that are just clever enough to keep within the margin line of sedition you may be quite sure that the young and excited mind will not draw any fine distinctions, but will proceed to ruin on the path where the coward's finger has indicated the way. If public opinion now awakening marks its abhorrence of the terrorists' doing and ideas and if the people themselves take measures which they only can take to protect the young from contamination the movement will wither before the public condemnation. This counter-movement has started and I trust that it will be taken up by parents, guardians and all public men in the towns and villages. Referring to the recent floods, *His Excellency* observed that the damages was confined to a part of Nowgong and the submontane portion of Sylhet district, the losses in the former being much the heavier. Gratuitous relief was given to all in emergent distress, seed grain was supplied and free grants and loans were given to replace the lost cattle. Provisions had also been made for agricultural loans. No demand made by District Officers for measures of relief had been refused. *His Excellency* paid a high tribute to the leading gentry who had formed relief com-

mitees and managers of tea estates and societies such as the Ramkrishna Mission, Christian Missions and Marwari Associations for their excellent charitable work. Among the greatest benefactors of the province, His Excellency said, were the Trustees of the Indian People's Famine Fund who had contributed a lakh and a quarter. His Excellency added that unemployment of educated young men went deeper even than economic depression and involved the whole question of educational policy in which Assam could not move alone. He stated that the Government were making a careful study of the Committee's attractive recommendation for the establishment of agricultural colonies. Although Assam possessed land there was the initial difficulty of arranging to place on that a class of young men who in outlook, aptitude and desire were wholly divorced from rural life. The Government were hampered by poverty. His Excellency hoped that when financial adjustments were made in the new Constitution Assam would be placed, as it was her due, in a position to make good the ground she had lost.

As regards the recommendations of the Committee for the solution of the unemployment problem involving an expenditure of many lakhs. His Excellency said that the Government of India were taking practical steps towards economic reconstruction. With their help it was hoped to tackle two at least of the fundamental problems, namely efficient marketing of produce and development of subsidiary industries, particularly the handloom industry. The Agricultural Research Council had enabled the Assam Government to undertake schemes for the improvement and expansion of crops and with their aid further scheme in connection with animal husbandry, fruit growing and winter crops were hoped to be undertaken.

#### NON-OFFICIAL BILLS

**18th. SEPTEMBER :—**In the Council to-day *Maulavi Abdul Khalique Chaudhury* moved for consideration of the *Assam Local Rates Bill (1933)*, *Assam Local Funds (Accounts and Audit) Amendment Bill (1933)*, *Assam Local Self-Government Amendment Bill (1933)* and the *Assam Mahomedan Marriages Divorces Registration Bill (1933)*. With the exception of the *Assam Local Funds Amendment Bill*, which the House refused to accept for consideration, the other three Bills were accepted by the Council for the purpose of circulation with a view to eliciting public opinion by January 1935.

*Mr. Rohini Kumar Chaudhury* moved for leave to introduce the *Assam Municipal Amendment Bill (1934)*. This was also accepted for circulation for eliciting public opinion.

#### STOPPAGE OF FLOOD RELIEF

*Mr. Rohini Kumar Chaudhury* raised an adjournment motion to discuss a matter of public importance, viz, the stoppage of gratuitous relief in some parts of Nowgong and Kamrup and indifference of the Government with regard to that matter. After considerable discussion by several members of the House in the course of which eloquent tributes were paid to the work done in Nowgong by the Deputy Commissioner, *Mr. Marrar* and the Nowgong Flood Relief Committee, the motion was negatived. The Hon'ble *Mr. A. J. Laine*, Revenue Member, assured the House that though gratuitous relief was stopped, instructions were given to deal with individual cases of hardship.

#### NON-OFFICIAL BILLS

**19th. SEPTEMBER :—**In the Council to-day *Maulavi Abdul Khalique Chaudhury* moved the introduction of the *Assam Births and Deaths Registration Bill, 1934* which was referred to a select committee.

His second bill, the *Assam Village Chaukidari Bill, 1934* was accepted for circulation for eliciting public opinion. His third bill, the *Assam Private Fisheries Protection Bill, 1934* was also sent to a select committee.

#### ENQUIRY INTO RYOTS' CONDITION

The Council adopted the resolution moved by *Mr. Rohini Kumar Choudhury* for appointing a committee consisting of the Revenue Member, the Commissioner of Assam Valley Division and five non-official members to enquire and report on the condition of the ryots, the advisability of reducing temporarily or permanently the revenue assessed on the agricultural land and the steps that should be taken to improve their condition.



## DISMISSAL OF MOUZADARS

Mr. *Kasinath Saikia's* resolution for making the appointment, dismissal and suspension of mauzaders by the Deputy Commissioners of districts subject to an appeal to the Government of Assam was withdrawn on the assurance given by the Hon'ble Mr. *A. J. Laine* that the matter would be considered by the Government.

## SCHOOL BOARDS FOR ASSAM

**20th. SEPTEMBER :—**The Council discussed to-day a resolution moved by *Khan Sahib Maulavi Muhammad Musharaff*, recommending that District School Boards for primary education be established in every district of the province. His object was to take the control out of the local boards with a view to improve the management of primary schools. The Hon'ble *Maulvi Abdul Hamid* left the matter to be decided by the House and did not either accept or reject it. A lengthy discussion followed and when the motion was ultimately put to vote, it was lost by 27 to 4 votes.

## REMISSION OF UNREALISED AGRICULTURAL LOANS

*Babu Gopendralal Das Choudhury* brought a resolution recommending to the Government of Assam that in view of the widespread financial distress prevailing in the country for a long time past due to general economic depression and in view of the wholesale destruction of crops by floods this year, all agricultural loans that have as yet remained unrealised throughout the province be remitted and written off. This resolution was withdrawn after an assurance was given by Mr. *S. P. Desai*, that an enquiry would be made as to the amount of loan unrecoverable.

## ASSAM RURAL SELF-GOVT. BILL

**21st. SEPTEMBER :—**The Council passed to-day the *Assam Rural Self-Government (Amendment) Bill of 1934*. The presidents of village courts will under the provisions of the Act be appointed by the Government. Mr. *Sarveswar Barua's* amendment regarding the president being elected by members of a village court was lost by 15 to 19 votes.

## THE ASSAM TENANCY BILL

The *Assam Tenancy Bill* of 1934 moved by the Hon'ble Mr. *A. J. Laine*, Revenue Member, was referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Hon'ble *Rai Bahadur Kanak Lal Barua*, Mr. *Sarveswar Barua*, Mr. *Mohendra Nath Gohain*, *Khan Bahadur Maulvi Keramat Ali*, Mr. *Brindaban Chandra Goswami*, *Khan Bahadur Maulvi Nuruddin Ahmed*, *Kumar Bhupendra Narain Deb*, Mr. *Rohini Kumar Chaudhury*, Mr. *Harendra Chandra Chakrabarti*, Mr. *F. J. Heathcote*, Mr. *S. P. Desai* and the mover.

## CONSTRUCTION OF MATERNITY WARD

*Rai Bahadur Kanaklal Barua's* motion that a scheme for the construction of a maternity and gynaecology ward in the Dibrugarh hospital costing Rs. 22,288 (non-recurring) and Rs. 2,262 (recurring) might be undertaken without delay as soon as the Government realise a sum not less than Rs. 16,000 for the purpose from private contributions was accepted by the House.

## PRESIDENT'S WARNING TO OFFICIAL BENCH

**22nd. SEPTEMBER :—**The Hon'ble *Maulvi Faiznoor Ali*, President, made the following observation before announcing the prorogation. He had, he said, to disallow many questions addressed to the Council as they did not conform to the rules and orders of the House. He expressed his dissatisfaction at the manner in which questions put in reference to newspaper articles were replied by the Government. To a question such as "Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the article so and so in such and such paper", the Government members sometimes replied 'no'. The President said it was the duty of Government to keep themselves informed of what was going on in the country. He however advised the members that with regard to newspaper articles, a member asking a question must make himself responsible for it and the question must be self-contained giving necessary details so that members might understand it.

The Council accepted to-day a motion for reconstituting the Road Board. The Council then passed a few demands for grants after which it was *prorogued*.



# **CONGRESS AND CONFERENCES**

**JULY—DECEMBER 1934**

# Congress Presidents.

## 1885-1934

Session	Year	Place	Name of the president
1	1885	BOMBAY	MR. W. C. BONNERJEE.
2	1886	CALCUTTA	MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI.
3	1887	MADRAS	MR. BUDRUDDIN TYABJI.
4	1888	ALLAHABAD	MR. GEORGE YULE
5	1889	BOMBAY	SIR. WILLIAM WEDDERBURN.
6	1890	CALCUTTA	MR. P. M. MEHTA.
7	1891	NAGPUR	MR. ANANDA CHARLU.
8	1892	ALLAHABAD	MR. W. C. BONNERJEE.
9	1893	LAHORE	MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI.
10	1894	MADRAS	MR. ALFRED WEBB.
11	1895	POONA	SIR SURENDRA NATH BANERJEA.
12	1896	CALCUTTA	MR. RAHIMTOOLA SAYANI.
13	1897	AMRAOTI	MR. C. SANKARAN NAIR.
14	1898	MADRAS	MR. A. M. BOSE.
15	1899	LUCKNOW	MR. R. C. DUTTA.
16	1900	LAHORE	MR. N. G. CHANDAVARKAR.
17	1901	CALCUTTA	MR. D. E. WACHA.
18	1902	AHMEDABAD	SIR SURENDRA NATH BANERJEA.
19	1903	MADRAS	MR. LAL MOHAN GHOSE.
20	1904	BOMBAY	SIR HENRY COTTON.
21	1905	BENARES	MR. G. K. GOKHALE.
22	1906	CALCUTTA	MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI.
23	1907	SURAT	DR. RASH BEHARY GHOSH.
23	1908	MADRAS	DR. RASH BEHARY GHOSH.
24	1909	LAHORE	PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA.
25	1910	ALLAHABAD	SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN.
26	1911	CALCUTTA	PANDIT BISHAN NARAYAN DHAR.
27	1912	BANKIPUR	MR. R. N. MUDHOLKAR.
28	1913	KARACHI	NAWAB SYED MAIOMED.
29	1914	MADRAS	MR. BHUPENDRA NATH BASU.
30	1915	BOMBAY	LORD SINHA.
31	1916	LUCKNOW	MR. AMBICA CHARAN MAZUMDAR.
32	1917	CALCUTTA	MRS. ANNIE BESANT.
Special	1918	BOMBAY	SYED HASSAN IMAM.
33	1918	DELHI	PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA.
34	1919	AMRITSAR	PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU.
Special	1920	CALCUTTA	LALA LAJPAT RAI
35	1920	NAGPUR	MR. VIJAYA RAGHAYA CHARIAR.
36	1921	AHMEDABAD	MR. C. R. DAS (BEING IN PRISON) H. AJMAL KHAN PRESIDED.
37	1922	GAYA	MR. C. R. DAS.
Special	1923	DELHI	ABUL KALAM AZAD.
38	1923	COCANADA	MAULANA MOHAMAD ALL.
39	1924	BELGAUM	MAHATMA GANDHI.
40	1925	CAWNPORE	MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU.
41	1926	GAUHATI	MR. SRINIVASA IYENGAR.
42	1927	MADRAS	DR. M. A. ANSARI.
43	1928	CALCUTTA	PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU.
44	1929	LAHORE	PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU.
45	1931	KARACHI	SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL.
46	1932	DELHI	SETH RANCHODLAL.
47	1933	CALCUTTA	MRS. NELIE SEN-GUPTA.
48	1934	BOMBAY	BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD.

# The Indian National Congress

## Proceedings of the Working Committee

**Kashividyapith—Benares—27th to 30th July 1934**

The Working Committee met at the Kashi Vidyapith, Benaras, on the July 27th, 28th, 29th and 30th, 1934. *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel* presided and the following members were present :—

1. *Mahatma Gandhi*, 2. *Seth Jamnalal Bajaj*, 3. *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad* 4. *Syt. Rajendra Prasad*, 5. *Syt. M. S. Aney*, 6. *Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar*, 7. *Syt. K. F. Nariman*, 8. *Dr. Syed Mahmud* and *Syt. Jairamdas Doulatram*. *Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya* and *Syt. C. Rajagopalachari* attended by special invitation.

The minutes of the last meeting of the Committee were confirmed and also those of its meeting held at Bombay on 29th, 30th and 31st December 1931 and 1st January 1932. The following are among the resolutions passed :—

### 1. Swadeshi

Doubts having arisen on the Congress policy in regard to Swadeshi, it has become necessary to reaffirm the Congress position on it in unequivocal terms.

Notwithstanding what was done during the civil resistance struggle, no competition is permissible on Congress platforms and in Congress exhibitions between mill-made cloth and handspun and handwoven khadi. Congressmen are expected to use and encourage the use of only handspun and handwoven khadi to the exclusion of any other cloth.

In regard to articles other than cloth, the Working Committee adopts the following formula for the guidance of all Congress organisations :—

The Working Committee is of opinion that the activities of Congress organisations relating to Swadeshi shall be restricted to useful articles manufactured in India through cottage and other small industries which are in need of popular education for their support and which will accept the guidance of the Congress organisations in regulating prices and in the matter of the wages and welfare of labour under their control.

This formula must not be interpreted to mean any modification of the unbroken policy of the Congress to promote the Swadeshi spirit in the country and to encourage the personal use of only Swadeshi articles. The formula is a recognition of the fact that the large and organised industries which can or do command State aid are in no need of the services of Congress organisations or any Congress effort in their behalf.

### 2. Office-bearers and Congress Policy

The Working Committee is of opinion that all Congressmen, whether they believe in the Congress programme and policies or not, are expected, and office-bearers and members of the Executive are in honour bound, to carry them out, and that office-bearers and members of the Executive who carry on propaganda or act against the Congress programme and policies are, in accordance with the rules made by the A. I. C. C. dated May 24, 1929 under Act. XXXI of the Constitution, clearly guilty of breach of discipline and liable to disciplinary action.

### 3. Illegal Election Methods

The Working Committee has noted with deep regret that practices have crept into Congress election methods which are reprehensible and even calculated to invalidate elections. Such, for instance, is the habit of some parties making members by paying their fees with the only object of securing their votes, whereas the object of enrolling members is to keep them in touch with and to interest them in the Congress programme and to take from them such national service as they may be capable of doing. The practice has also grown up in some places of candidates buying for the occasion sufficient khaddar to clothe voters temporarily for the purpose of complying with Article VII (iv) a of the Constitution whereas it

requires that the voters should be habitual wearers of khaddar. The Working Committee has no doubt that the practice is illegal and defeats the very end for which the khaddar clause was introduced. Election Boards and presiding authorities are to invalidate the votes of those who are manifestly not habitual wearers of khaddar.

#### 4. Regarding Resolution No. 13 of 18-6-34

The following resolution was passed by the Working Committee on 18th June 1934 :—

“Whilst the Working Committee welcomes the formation of groups representing different schools of thought, it is necessary, in view of loose talk about confiscation of private property and necessity of class war, to remind Congressmen that the Karachi resolution as finally settled by the A. I. C. C. at Bombay in August 1931, which lays down certain principles, neither contemplates confiscation of private property without just cause or compensation, nor advocacy of class war. The Working Committee is further of opinion that confiscation and class war are contrary to the Congress creed of non-violence. At the same time the Working Committee is of opinion that the Congress does contemplate wiser and juster use of private property so as to prevent the exploitation of the landless poor, and also contemplates a healthier relationship between capital and labour”.

Complaints have been made to the Working Committee that this resolution is a reflection upon the newly formed “Congress Socialist Party” and its programme. The Working Committee desires it to be known that the resolution was not intended to criticise any party or its programme but was intended to affect individuals engaged in the loose talk referred to in the resolution.

#### 5. Syt. M. S. Aney's Resignation

The Working Committee having considered the resignation of Syt. M. S. Aney, recognises the high minded motive that has prompted the resignation and regretfully accepts it. The Working Committee places on record its sense of the great assistance rendered by him to the Committee.

#### 6. Dr. Mohammad Alam's Resignation

The resignation of *Dr. Mohammed Alam* dated 24-7-34 was considered by the Working Committee and the Committee accepted the resignation.

#### 7. Congress Re-organization in Bengal

The Working Committee trusts and hopes that all the political groups in Bengal will coalesce and work in harmony so as to enable the Bengal P. C. C. and the district and other sub-committees to function normally and without friction and so as to avoid questionable practices. The Working Committee suggests that the best method of ensuring purity and peace in the setting up of the Congress machinery is by agreement to secure uncontested elections in all the constituencies or as many as possible. If, unfortunately, the Congress machinery cannot be set up in Bengal without the assistance of the Working Committee, it authorises Syt. M. S. Aney to function, as before, as representative of the Working Committee and to exercise all its powers to enable him to adjust differences, regulate elections, give decisions on points arising in connection with elections and to do all other things that may be necessary to set up without delay the Congress organization in Bengal. The Working Committee hopes that Syt. Aney will receive from Congressmen all the help that he may need in the discharge of the responsibility entrusted to him.

#### 8. Puri Reception Committee Surplus

Read letter of Utkal P. C. C. dated 4-7-34. Resolved that the amount should be utilized for such public purpose or purposes as the Reception Committee or the donors may decide.

#### Satyagraha Ashram—Wardha—9th. & 11th. September 1934

The Working Committee met at Satyagraha Ashram, Wardha, on September 9th and 11th, 1934. *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel* presided. The following members were present :

1. Mahatma Gandhi, 2. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, 3. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu,
4. Syt. K. F. Nariman, 5. Syt. Jairamdas Doulatram. Pandit Madan Mohan

*Malaviya* and *Sjt. M. S. Aney* attended on the first day and *Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan* and *Dr. Khan Sahib* on both the days by special invitation. The following resolutions were passed :—

### 1. Congress Goal and the Means of its Attainment

Misgivings have risen in the minds of some Congressmen and others that the Congress goal of *Poorna Swaraj* or Complete Independence is being imperceptibly watered down. The Working Committee desires, therefore, to state that no Congressman, much less any Congress organisation, can do so without being liable to the charge of indiscipline. Congressmen and Congress organisations have to shape their course so to accelerate the pace towards the goal by keeping *Poorna Swaraj* before their eyes as well as the means for its attainment which must be strictly non-violent and truthful. To this end, Congressmen are expected to give effect to the resolutions and instructions that may from time to time be issued by the A. I. C. C. or the Working Committee. *Poorna Swaraj* includes unfettered national control among other things, over the Army and other defence forces, external affairs, fiscal and commercial matters, financial and economic policy. A free India should have the freedom to make its choice between voluntary partnership with the British and complete separation. Whilst the Congress will not repudiate just obligation, it must adhere to the resolution to have an impartial scrutiny of the obligation to be undertaken by free India. The Congress has repeatedly declared from its inception that the British Empire, as it is constituted to-day, is designed predominantly, if not purely, to subserve British interests at the cost of India and that therefore whilst it will gladly cultivate friendship with the British, it must strain every nerve to end the present unnatural and humiliating connection.

But the Congress has also equally repeatedly declared that this political freedom must remain unattainable without attaining moral or internal freedom by carrying out the comprehensive internal and constructive programme laid down from time to time by the Working Committee. The Congress is nothing if it does not progressively represent and serve the masses. Such service is impossible without following constructive programme of the Congress with meticulous care and devotion.

### II. Congress and Coming Elections

The Working Committee considers it desirable to impress on all the Provincial and other subordinate Congress organisations including their office-bearers and members of Executive Committees that it is their duty to help Congress Parliamentary Boards in its election activities and that it is not open to them to support any party or candidate opposed to the official policy of the Congress and it expects every Congressman, save on grounds of conscience, to support the Congress candidates in the forthcoming elections to the Assembly.

### III. Zanzibar Indians

The Working Committee having learnt from *Deenabandhu Andrews* the deplorable condition of the Indian settlers of Zanzibar assures them of its sympathy and hopes for the averting of contemplated forcible expropriation of their just rights in a land in which they have settled with families for centuries and in which they have lived in perfect peace with the original inhabitants and, armless, have relied for their safety on just dealings with them and consequent faith in their goodwill.

The Committee reiterates its sense of gratitude towards *Deenabandhu Andrews* for his unremitting efforts on behalf of Indian settlers overseas, expresses its full confidence in his selfless mission and hopes that he will continue his labours in this direction.

### IV. Postponement of the Bombay Congress

Read telegram from *Sjt. S. Satyamurti* suggesting the postponement of the ensuing session of the Congress to some date after the Assembly elections and resolved that the Working Committee did not consider it desirable to postpone the session.

### V. Basis of Calculating Delegates

Resolved that the basis of calculating the number of delegates returnable by Provincial Congress Committees to the forthcoming session of the Congress at Bombay shall, as required by the Article VIII of the Constitution, be the population of the respective Congress provinces according to the census of 1921.



**VI. Final date for Congress Membership**

In view of the special circumstances this year, the Working Committee resolves that the final date for enlistment as Congress member under para 2 of Article VIII of the Constitution shall be 24th September 1934.

**VII. Grant for work for Indians Overseas**

The Working Committee considered the application of Sjt. Benarsidas Chaturvedi for the renewal of the monthly grant of Rs. 25 for publicity work for Indians overseas and resolved that the application should be placed before the Committee after the next Congress.

**Congress and Nationalist Party**

Sjt. *M. S. Aney* had sent to the President of the Working Committee a letter enclosing the resolution of the new party formed by him. Thereupon, as the Parliamentary Board was to meet at Wardha during the week, he invited the members of the Working Committee also to meet and consider the proposal contained in the resolution to convene a meeting of the A. I. C. C. so as to have the resolution of the Working Committee on the Communal Award reviewed by the A. I. C. C. The President invited *Pandit Malaviyaji* and Sjt. *Aney* to attend the meeting and present their viewpoint in person. The Working Committee duly met and gave several hours to the consideration of the question of calling a meeting of the A. I. C. C. and finally came to the conclusion that inasmuch as the Working Committee had no doubt about the propriety of its action and in view of the fact that new elections for the A. I. C. C. are going on, the Working Committee could not take the responsibility of calling the meeting. It was mentioned at the meeting that if members of the A. I. C. C. had any grievance against the Working Committee in respect of its resolution, it was open to any 30 members of the A. I. C. C. to send a requisition which would have compelled the Working Committee to convene such a meeting.

The Working Committee also discussed the question of releasing, on the grounds of conscience, candidates for election to the Assembly, from the obligation to conform to the Working Committee resolution on the Communal Award. The Working Committee came to the conclusion, in the absence of any such resolution on release by the Working Committee, that no exemption could be granted. Gandhiji had made a proposal to Panditji, in answer to a message sent by the latter through Sjt. Aney, that the way to avoid acrimony and conflict was to reach an agreement on the basis of examination of the prospects of success of rival candidates, the candidature of those who had less chance of success being withdrawn. But while on this no agreement could be reached, the Board decided not to contest seats where *Pandit Malaviyaji* and Sjt. *Aney* stood as candidates. It was also decided not to enter into contest in Sindh and in the city of Calcutta.

**Indian National Congress—48th. Session**

Abdul Gaffar Nagar—Bombay—26th—28th October 1934

*Sjt. Rajendra Prasad* presided over the Session and Sjt. *K. F. Nariman* was Chairman of the Reception Committee. The following resolutions were passed:—

**I. Endorsement Resolution**

This Congress endorses the resolutions passed by the Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee at their meetings held in May 1934 and thereafter, especially the resolutions regarding the Parliamentary Board and its policy and programme, the constructive programme, the status of Indian settlers overseas, condolence resolution and the resolution on Swadeshi.

**II. Nation's Sacrifices & Faith in Civil Resistance**

This Congress congratulates the nation on the heroic sacrifices made and the sufferings undergone by thousands of civil resisters—men and women, young

and old, drawn from cities as well as the villages in the different provinces—and places on record its conviction that without non-violent non-co-operation and civil resistance there would never have been the phenomenal mass awakening that has taken place throughout the country. Whilst recognising the desirability and necessity of the suspension of the civil resistance campaign except with reference to Gandhiji, the Congress reiterates its undying faith in non-violent non-co-operation and civil resistance as a better means of achieving Swaraj than methods of violence which, as experience has abundantly shown, result in terrorism both by the oppressed and the oppressors.

### III. Mrs. Jawaharlal Nehru's Illness

This Congress shares the anxiety of the Nehru family over the illness of Mrs. Jawaharlal Nehru, and hopes that the change to the hills will result in her restoration to health.

### IV. The All India Village Industries Association

Whereas organisations claiming to advance Swadeshi have sprung up all over the country with and without the assistance of Congressmen and whereas much confusion has arisen in the public mind as to the true nature of Swadeshi and whereas the aim of the Congress has been from its inception progressive identification with the masses and whereas village re-organisation and reconstruction is one of the items in the constructive programme of the Congress and whereas such reconstruction necessarily implies revival and encouragement of dead or dying village industries besides the central industry of hand-spinning and whereas this work, like the re-organisation of hand-spinning, is possible only through the concentrated and special effort unaffected by and independent of the political activities of the Congress, Shri J. C. Kumarappa is hereby authorised to form, under the advice and guidance of Gandhiji, an association called the *All-India Village Industries Association* as part of the activities of the Congress. The said association shall work for the revival and encouragement of the said industries and for the moral and physical advancement of the villages, and shall have power to frame its own constitution, to raise funds and to perform such acts as may be necessary for the fulfilment of its objects.

### V. Exhibitions & Demonstrations

Inasmuch as it is desirable to free the Reception Committee from the distraction and expenses attendant upon the organisation of exhibitions and spectacular demonstrations that take place at the annual sessions of the Congress and as these make it impossible for similar places to invite the Congress, the Reception Committees shall henceforth be relieved of the task of organising exhibitions and spectacular demonstrations. But as exhibitions and spectacular demonstrations are a necessary part of the annual national gathering, the duty of organising these is hereby entrusted to the All India Spinners' Association and the All India Village Industries Association which bodies shall organise these functions so as to combine instruction with entertainment of the general public especially of the villagers, with the sole view to illustrate and popularise the activities of the two associations and generally to demonstrate the potentiality of village life.

### VII. Congress Parliamentary Board

The following resolution was passed by the Congress Parliamentary Board on 11th September last at Wardha:—

“Resolved that inasmuch as this Board was constituted as an emergency measure, it is desirable that its life should be limited to one year and that thereafter it should be placed on an elective basis for the period and on the terms as may appear desirable. This should be forwarded to the Working Committee as a recommendation of the Board”.

This Congress accepts the said recommendation and resolves that the existing Parliamentary Board shall be dissolved on 1st May 1935 and a new Board of 25 shall be elected by the A. I. C. C. on or before the aforesaid date.

The elected Board shall have the power to co-opt not more than five members.

There shall be a fresh election of the Parliamentary Board at every annual session of the Congress with the same power of co-option.

The elected Board shall possess the same powers as are possessed by the existing Board,

**VII. Revised Constitution**

The Congress adopts the following constitution :—  
(See Constitution printed separately).

**VIII. Khaddar Qualification**

No member shall be eligible for election to any office or to any Congress Committee unless he is a habitual wearer wholly of hand-spun and hand-woven Khaddar.

**IX. Labour Qualification**

No person shall be eligible to be a candidate for election to membership of any Congress Committee, unless he or she has performed some manual labour continuously for six months immediately before the date of nomination for election on behalf of or for the Congress equal in value to 500 yards per month of well spun yarn of over ten counts, and in time to eight hours per month. The form of acceptable labour alternative to spinning shall be prescribed from time to time by the Working Committee in consultation with the Provincial Congress Committees and the All India Village Industries Association.

**X. Gandhiji's Retirement**

This Congress reiterates its confidence in the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and is emphatically of opinion that he should reconsider his decision to retire from the Congress. But inasmuch as all efforts to persuade him in that behalf have failed this Congress, while reluctantly accepting his decision, places on record its deep sense of gratitude for the unique services rendered by him to the Nation and notes with satisfaction his assurance that his advice and guidance will be available to the Congress whenever necessary.

**XI. Next Session**

Resolved that the next session of the Congress be held in the U. P.

## The All-India Congress Committee

The All India Congress Committee met at the Subjects Committee Pandal in Abdul Gaffar Nagar, Bombay, at 2 p.m. on the 23rd. October, 1934. *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, the out-going President, presided and about 190 members were present.

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the last meeting held at Patna on 18th and 19th May, 1934.

The General Secretaries' report for April 1933 to September 1934 with a statement of accounts of the All-India Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund from 4-1-32 to 31-3-1934 was submitted.

The proceedings of the Working Committee for 1934 were placed before the meeting.

The out-going President then vacated the chair and the Committee converted itself into the Subjects Committee of the Congress and *Sjt. Rajendra Prasad* the President-elect of the Congress presided.

## Proceedings of the Working Committee

**Abdul Gaffar Nagar—Bombay—20th. to 29th. October 1934**

The Working Committee met in the President's camp, Abdul Gaffar Nagar, Bombay, from 20th to 29th October, 1934.

*Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel* presided till the 23rd and *Sjt. Rajendra Prasad* thereafter, and the following members, besides the above two were present at one or more meetings :—

1. *Mahatma Gandhi*; 2. *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad*; 3. *Shrimati Sarojini Naidu*; 4. *Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar*; 5. *Sjt. K. F. Nariman*; 6. *Dr. Syed Mahmud*; 7. *Dr. M. A. Ansari*; and 8. *Sjt. Jairamdas Doulatram*.

The minutes of the last meetings held at Benares from 27th to 30th July and at Wardha on 9th and 11th September, 1934 were taken as read and confirmed.

The Committee confirmed the President's orders extending, in case of Burma, till 30th September, 1934 the time fixed for enrolment of Congress members.

The statement of accounts of the All India Congress Committee office for September, 1934 was placed before the Committee.

Re: Bill of Rs. 48 for hire of furniture for the Matunga camp in 1931 Mr. Nariman stated that he would look into the matter.

The General Secretaries' report was submitted to the Committee.

The statement of account of the All India Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund from 4th January 1933 to 31st March 1934 was passed by the Working Committee for incorporation in the General Secretaries' report.

The Committee passed the following resolutions :—

The Committee accepts the principle of the amendment suggested by Gandhiji in the Appendix to his statement of 15th October, 1934 and, therefore, appoints a committee consisting of the following members :—

1. *Mahatma Gandhi*; 2. *Sjt. Bhulabhai J. Desai*; 3. *Sjt. K. M. Munshi*; 4. *Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya* and 5. *Sjt. Jairamdas Daulatram* (Convenor) with power to co-opt, to consider those amendments and to submit its report on the evening of 21st October.

The following resolutions were recommended to the Subjects Committee for adoption (see Congress resolutions):

- I. Endorsement,
- II. Nation's Sacrifices and Faith in Civil Resistance.\*
- III. Mrs. Jawaharlal Nehru's illness;
- IV. All India Village Industries Association;†
- V. Exhibitions and Demonstrations;
- VI. Khaddar Qualifications;
- VII. Congress Parliamentary Board;
- VIII. Labour Qualifications.
- IX. Amendment to creed (Art I.)‡

The Committee adopted the report of the Committee appointed to revise the Constitution (see Constitution adopted by the Congress, printed separately).

After the Congress was over i. e., on 29th October the Committee adopted the following resolutions :—

### Delegation of Powers to the President

Pending the next meeting of the Working Committee the President is hereby given all the powers of the Working Committee under the new constitution for the purpose of giving immediate effect to its provisions.

In view of the possibility of disputes arising in different provinces in the course of putting the new constitution into operation which may require immediate disposal the Working Committee further authorises the President, during the transitional period, to take such steps as he may consider proper to deal with disputes and where necessary decide them himself on behalf of the Working Committee.

### Date for Submission of Lists by P. C. C's

The Committee fixed the 15th of September 1935 for the Provincial Congress Committees to send to the Working Committee the lists of members qualified to vote, as required by Art. VI (a).

\* In this resolution, the words "complete substitute for" were changed by the Congress into "better means of achieving Swaraj than."

† The Subjects Committee made one or two minor alterations in this resolution.

‡ Amendment: In Art. I substitute the words "truthful and non-violent means" in place of the words, "legitimate and peaceful means."

This amendment was not accepted by the Subjects Committee.

### Ajmere Elections

Having heard both the parties and considered the report of the Sub-Committee appointed yesterday to look into the Ajmere Election dispute,

Resolved that in the opinion of this Committee the elections organised by Sjt. *Arjunlal Sethi* and *Pt. Gauri Shanker Bhargava* on 18th October were invalid as declared by the then President *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*.

Further that in view of the fact that Sjt. *Haribhan Upadhaya* and others whose elections of 18th October are now being disputed are considering *Mahatma Gandhi's* advice to tender their resignations, it is not necessary to go into the merits of the dispute.

In case such resignations are submitted by 13th November, \**Sardar* *Sardul Singh Caveeshar* is given all powers of the Working Committee to conduct and supervise co-option of members to P. C. C. and elections of office-bearers and Executive Committee of the Ajmere P. C. C. and members of A. I. C. C. with full powers to dispose of all disputes finally.

## Constitution of the Indian National Congress

( *As Amended at the Bombay Congress 1934* )

### Article I.—Objects

The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of *Poorna Swaraj* (Complete Independence) by all legitimate and peaceful means.

### Article II.—The Indian National Congress

The Indian National Congress shall comprise—

- (1) Members enrolled in primary committees under Article III ;
- (2) Provincial Congress Committees ;
- (3) Annual Session ;
- (4) All India Congress Committee ;
- (5) Working Committee ;

and may comprise (a) committees or associations directly organised by the A. I. C. C. or the Working Committee, or (b) committees organised by any Provincial Congress Committee in accordance with the rules framed by it in that behalf and approved by the Working Committee.

### Article III.—Membership

(a) Any person over the age of 18 years who believes in Article I shall, on making a written declaration to that effect and presenting an application in form A annexed hereto and on payment of four annas, be entitled to be placed on the register of Congress members kept at any office duly authorised in that behalf within the district in which he ordinarily resides or carries on business.

Provided that no person shall be a member of more than one primary committee at the same time.

(b) The application shall be presented in duplicate and may be handed in personally or sent by post or messenger.

(c) It shall state the full name, sex, and occupation of the applicant as also the village, the taluka, the district and the Province in which he ordinarily resides or carries on business.

(d) The official receiving the application after recording on it the date of receipt, serial number and such other particulars as may be prescribed shall send one of the duplicates to the office of the Provincial Congress Committee concerned.

(e) The applicant, on being enrolled, shall receive a certificate of membership as per form B annexed hereto and printed on durable paper, either in the language and script of the Province in which he resides or in the Hindustani language written in Devanagiri or Urdu script.

(f) Unless otherwise directed by the Working Committee the year of the membership shall be reckoned from April 1st to March 31st and there shall be no



reduction in the subscription to be paid by members joining in the middle of the year.

*Article IV.—Provinces*

(a) The following shall be the provinces with the headquarters mentioned against them.

<i>Province</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Headquarters</i>
1. Ajmer-Merwara	Hindustani	Ajmer
2. Andhra	Telugu	Bezwada
3. Assam	Assamese	Gauhati
4. Behar	Hindustani	Patna
5. Bengal	Bengali	Calcutta
6. Berar	Marathi	Amraoti
7. Bombay (City)	Marathi and Gujarati	Bombay
8. Burma	Burmese	Rangoon
9. Central Provinces (Marathi)	Marathi	Nagpur
10. Delhi	Hindustani	Delhi
11. Gujarat	Gujarati	Ahmedabad
12. Karnatak	Kannada	Dharwar
13. Kerala	Malayalam	Shornur
14. Mahakoshal (Central Provinces Hindustani)	Hindustani	Jubbulpur
15. Maharashtra	Marathi	Poona
16. N. W. F. Province	Hindustani	Peshawar
17. Punjab	Punjabi	Lahore
18. Sindh	Sindhi	Karachi
19. Tamil Nadu	Tamil	Madras
20. United Provinces	Hindustani	Lucknow
21. Utkal	Oriya	Cuttack

(b) Any Provincial Congress Committee with the previous sanction of the Working Committee shall have the power to alter its headquarters from time to time.

(c) The Working Committee may after ascertaining the wishes of the Provincial Congress Committee or Committees concerned constitute a new Province, or assign to a province districts from another Province as also assign an Indian State to any Province.

*Article V.—Qualifications*

(a) No member shall be entitled to exercise his vote at any election unless he has been continuously on a Congress register for six months prior to the date of the election.

(b) No member even if he is qualified under clause (a) hereof shall be eligible for election to an office or to membership of any Congress Committee unless

(i) he is a habitual wearer wholly of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar ;

(ii) he has performed some manual labour continuously for six months immediately before the date of nomination for election, on behalf of or for the Congress, equal in value to 500 yards per month of well-spun yarn of over ten counts, and in time to eight hours per month ; the forms of acceptable labour alternative to spinning being prescribed from time to time by the Working Committee in consultation with the Provincial Congress Committees concerned and the All India Village Industries Association or the All India Spinners Association ;

and provided that at the time of offering himself for such election he is not a member of any other parallel committee.

(c) No person who is a member of any elected Congress Committee shall be member of any similar committee of a communal organisation the object or programme of which involves political activities which are, in the opinion of the Working Committee, anti-national and in conflict with those of the Congress.

*Article VI.—Election of Delegates*

At the end of every Annual Session the Working Committee shall fix a date and time not earlier than eight months after the date of such decision when every

Provincial Congress Committee shall send to the Working Committee a certified list of members of its primary committees qualified to vote. The list must reach the office of the Working Committee on or before the said or any other extended date and time.

(b) Members included in the said list shall alone be entitled to vote at the election of delegates in that province.

(c) In the event of a Provincial Congress Committee failing to furnish the list in time, the province concerned may be disentitled to elect its delegates.

(d) On receipt of the aforesaid lists the Working Committee shall fix the date by which the election of delegates must be held and the quota of delegates which each province is entitled to return, and call upon the Provincial Congress Committees to proceed with the election of their respective quota.

(e) For the purposes of election the provinces referred to in Article IV hereof shall be divided into rural and urban areas.\*

(f) The rural area as also every town with a population of more than 10,000 persons in a district shall each be entitled to elect one delegate for every five hundred duly qualified members on the rolls of its primary committees or for such other number as may be fixed by the Working Committee in accordance with clause (h) hereof subject to the following :

(i) The maximum number of delegates shall not exceed two thousand. Out of the said number 511 shall be the maximum for the urban area and 1489 for the rural area.

(ii) No province shall be entitled to return a large number of delegates than a proportion of one delegate to every 150,000 of the inhabitants of such province including the States or agencies therein, or a fraction thereof, in accordance with the census of 1921.

Proviso I. The maximum number of delegates sent by the urban area in each province shall not exceed 25 per cent of the total number returnable by the province as aforesaid.

Proviso II. Bombay (City), shall have a maximum quota of 21 delegates.

Proviso III. Every province shall be entitled to return a minimum of 10 delegates irrespective of the strength of its primary members.

(g) (i) Where the rural area of a district has a sufficient number of duly qualified members on the rolls of its primary committees, the Provincial Congress Committee shall divide such area into suitable circles, so as to include in each circle not less than five hundred duly qualified members and each circle shall be entitled to elect a delegate.

(ii) On a demand made in writing by 500 duly qualified members enrolled on the primary committees of one or more contiguous circles of a district, the said circles, where possible, shall be combined into a plural-member constituency of not more than five seats.

(iii) Wherever possible, a town with a population of more than 10,000 persons shall be divided into plural-member constituencies of not less than five and not more than 10 seats, provided the constituency can have at least 500 duly qualified members to every seat. But where the number of duly qualified members is less than 2500 the town shall be formed into a plural-member constituency with one seat to not less than 500 members each.

(iv) Election in plural-member constituencies shall be by proportional representation by single transferable vote.

(h) If and when necessary, the Working Committee may readjust the proportion of 500 duly qualified members to one delegate and prescribe a higher figure for any urban or rural area so that the total number of urban and rural delegates in each province may be in the proportion of 1 to 3 and may not in the aggregate exceed the maximum prescribed for it under f (ii).

(i) The province which has not completed its election on or before the date appointed by the Working Committee may at the discretion of the Working Committee be disentitled to be represented at the Annual Session.

(j) A certified list of delegates shall be submitted by the Provincial Congress Committees not later than the date fixed by the Working Committee in that behalf.

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\*Note—'Urban area' means towns which have a population of more than ten thousand persons. 'Rural area' means area other than urban.

(k) Every delegate so elected shall, on payment of a fee of Rs. 5 at the office of the Provincial Congress Committee of his province, receive a certificate in accordance with Form C hereto annexed, duly signed by one of its secretaries. No delegate shall be entitled to exercise any of his functions of powers with such certificate.

*Article VII.—Election by the Delegates*

(a) On receipt by the Working Committee of the list of delegates it shall fix a date on which the delegates in every province shall assemble in a meeting to transact the following business:—

(i) To propose the candidate or candidates for the Presidentship of the Congress for the ensuing year and to record the vote of each of the delegates assembled on the proposals;

(ii) to elect from among themselves one-twelfth of their number as representatives of the province on the All India Congress Committee;

(iii) In case the number of delegates for the province exceeds 100, to elect from among themselves a number of members which, together with the members of the All India Congress Committee elected under clause (ii), would amount to 100 to constitute the Provincial Congress Committee of the province.

(b) The elections in sub-clauses (ii) and (iii) of Clause (a) shall be by proportional representation by single transferable vote.

(c) The Secretaries of the respective Provincial Congress Committees shall issue certificate of membership of the All India Congress Committee to the persons elected on it.

*Article VIII.—Provincial Congress Committees*

(a) The delegates elected from a province under Act. VI, or where the number of delegates is more than 100, one hundred delegates elected under Art. VII (a) (iii) as the case may be, and the President and the Ex-Presidents of the Congress, provided they are duly qualified under Articles III and V, shall form its Provincial Congress Committee.

(b) Every Provincial Congress Committee shall, (i) subject to the general control and supervision of the A. I. C. C., be in charge of the affairs of the Congress within its own province and to that end frame rules not inconsistent with this Constitution, which rules shall come into operation only with the previous sanction of the Working Committee;

(ii) submit an annual report of the work in the province to the Working Committee not later than one month before the commencement of the Annual Session;

(iii) before the new A. I. C. C. meets as Subjects Committee under Article IX (g), pay to the Working Committee the fees received from the delegates as also such subscription as may be fixed by the latter, having regard to the population membership and financial capacity of the province. Delegates and members of the A. I. C. C. from provinces in default shall not be permitted to take part in any of the proceedings of the Congress or any Committee thereof.

(c) (i) No Provincial Congress Committee and no subordinate committee shall be recognised by the Working Committee unless it has complied with the conditions laid down in this constitution or any rules framed thereunder by the Working Committee.

(ii) On failure on the part of any Provincial Congress Committee to function in terms of the Constitution, the Working Committee may form one to carry on Congress work in that province.

*Article IX—Annual Session*

The Annual Session shall be ordinarily held during the month of February or March. The said session shall be held at the place decided upon at the preceding session or such other place as may be determined by the Working Committee.

(b) The Annual Session shall consist of—

(i) the President of the Congress;

(ii) the ex-Presidents of the Congress, provided they are duly qualified under Art. III and V;

(iii) the delegates elected under Article VI.

(c) The Provincial Congress Committee concerned shall make such arrangements for holding the Annual Session as may be deemed necessary, and for this purpose shall form a Reception Committee, and may include therein persons who are not its members.

(d) The Reception Committee shall collect funds for the expenses of the session, make all necessary arrangements for the reception and accommodation of delegates and visitors and for the printing of the report of the proceedings of the session.

(e) The Reception Committee shall elect its Chairman and other office-bearers from amongst its own members.

(f) (i) As soon as may be, after the receipt of the report by the Working Committee of the names of Presidents proposed by the delegates of various provinces and the number of votes recorded in favour of each, the Working Committee shall announce as President-elect the name of the member obtaining the largest number of votes.

(ii) In the event of an emergency arising by reason of any cause, such as the death or resignation of the President elected in this manner, the Working Committee shall, not later than a fortnight after the emergency, elect as President the person standing next in order.

(g) The new A. I. C. C. shall meet as Subjects Committee at least two days before the annual session under the presidency of the President-elect. The out-going Working Committee shall submit to it the draft programme of the work for the session including resolution recommended by the different Provincial Congress Committees.

(h) The Subjects Committee shall proceed to discuss the programme and shall frame resolutions for being moved in the open session. At least one day shall be allotted for the consideration of propositions of which due notice has been given by Provincial Congress Committees or members of the A. I. C. C. other than those of the Working Committee in accordance with the rules prescribed in that behalf.

(i) At each sitting of the Congress, the order in which business shall be transacted shall be as follows :

(i) The resolutions recommended for adoption by the Subjects Committee.

(ii) Any substantive motion not included in (i) and which 25 delegates request the President in writing, before the commencement of the day's sitting, to be allowed to place before the Congress, provided, however, that no such motion shall be allowed unless it has been previously discussed at a meeting of the Subjects Committee and has received the support of at least a third of the members then present.

(j) The receipts and disbursements of the Reception Committee shall be audited by an auditor or auditors appointed by the Provincial Congress Committee concerned, and the statement of accounts together with the auditor's report shall be submitted by the Provincial Congress Committee to the Working Committee, not later than three months after the termination of the Annual Session.

#### *Article X.—Special Session*

(a) The Working Committee may upon its own motion, or shall upon a joint requisition addressed to it, as provided in Article XI (c), convene a meeting of the All India Congress Committee for considering a resolution for holding a Special Session. Such resolution shall be effective if passed by two thirds majority of the members present. Thereupon the Working Committee shall summon a Special Session of the Congress at such time and place as it shall determine and the Articles of the Constitution shall apply with such modifications as the Working Committee may consider necessary, provided that the delegates of the preceding session shall be the delegates for such Special Session.

(b) The President of a Special Session shall be elected by the delegates.

#### *Article XI.—All India Congress Committee*

(a) The President of the Annual Session, members of the A. I. C. C. elected under Art. VII (ii) and the Ex-Presidents referred to in the Art. IX (b) (ii) shall constitute the A. I. C. C.

(b) The A. I. C. C. shall carry out the programme of work laid down by the Congress from session to session and deal with all new matters that may arise during its term of office.

(c) The A. I. C. C. shall have the power to frame rules, not inconsistent with this Constitution, for regulating all matters connected with the Congress.

(d) The President of the Annual Session shall be the Chairman of the A. I. C. C.

(e) The A. I. C. C. shall meet as often as required by the Working Committee, or on a joint requisition addressed to the Working Committee by not less than fifteen members. Such requisition shall specify the purpose for which the requisitionists desire a meeting of the A. I. C. C. At such meeting additional items of business may be brought up for consideration, provided due notice thereof has been given to the members.

(f) Twenty-five or one-third of the total number of members, whichever is less, shall form the quorum.

(g) The A. I. C. C. shall hold office till the meeting of the new A. I. C. C. as Subjects Committee immediately before the next Annual Session.

(h) The A.I.C.C. shall, at its first meeting every year, nominate a panel of twelve members to enquire into and decide all election disputes coming before it. Each party to the dispute shall nominate one out of this panel to represent itself, and the President shall appoint an umpire from the panel.

(i) The A. I. C. C. may from time to time affiliate to the Congress such organisations as it may deem necessary provided such organisations are calculated to further or assist the object of the Congress.

(ii) Every member of the All India Congress Committee, ex-officio or elected, shall pay an annual subscription of Rs. 10 payable at or before the first meeting of the All India Congress Committee. Members in default will not be permitted to take part in any meeting of the All India Congress Committee, the Subjects Committee, or in any Session.

#### *Article XII.—Working Committee*

(a) The President of the Annual Session shall for his term of office select fourteen members from among the members of the A. I. C. C. to constitute his Working Committee including not more than three General Secretaries and not more than two Treasurers of the Congress.

(b) The Working Committee shall be the executive authority and as such shall have the power to carry into effect the policy and programme laid down by the A. I. C. C. and the Congress, and shall remain responsible thereto.

(c) The Working Committee shall place before every meeting of the A. I. C. C. the reports of its proceedings and the agenda of the meeting, and shall assign at least one clear day for resolutions of which due notice may have been given by the members of the A. I. C. C. other than those of the Working Committee in accordance with the rules prescribed in that behalf.

(d) The Working Committee shall appoint one or more inspectors to examine the records, papers and account books of all Congress organisations, which shall furnish all information and give to the inspectors access to all offices and records.

(e) The Working Committee shall have the power—

(i) To frame rules and issue instructions for the proper working of the Constitution and in all matters not otherwise provided for ;

(ii) To superintend, direct and control all Congress Committees subject to review by the A. I. C. C.

(iii) to take such disciplinary action as it may deem fit against a committee or individual for misconduct, wilful neglect or default.

(f) The Working Committee shall pay to the Provincial Congress Committee convening the Annual Session one-fifth of the fees recovered from the delegates within a fortnight of its termination.

(g) The Working Committee shall take steps to have a regular audit of the accounts of the Provincial Congress Committees.

#### *Article XIII.—Funds*

The Treasurers shall be in charge of the funds of the Congress and shall keep proper accounts of all investments, income and expenditure.

#### *Article XIV.—General Secretaries*

(a) The General Secretaries shall be in charge of the office of the A. I. C. C. and the Working Committee.

(b) The General Secretaries shall be responsible for the publication of the report of the proceedings of the Annual or Special Session in co-operation with



the Provincial Committee concerned. Such report shall be published as soon as possible and not later than four months after the Session.

(c) The General Secretaries shall prepare the report of the A. I. C. C. and the Working Committee during their period of office and submit it, with a full account of the funds which may have come into their hands, to the meeting of the A. I. C. C. immediately before the Annual Session.

#### *Article XV—Vacancies*

The office of a delegate or a member of the A. I. C. C. or a Provincial Congress Committee shall be vacated by resignation, death, or prolonged absence from India and such vacancy shall be filled by the Provincial Congress Committee concerned in the same matter in which the vacating member was chosen. A vacancy on the Working Committee shall be filled by the President.

#### *Article XVI.—Fractions*

Where there is a question of considering the value of fractions, a fraction of one and a half more shall be treated as one, and less than one and a half as zero.

#### *Article XVII.—Language*

(a) The proceedings of the Congress, the All India Congress Committee and the Working Committee shall ordinarily be conducted in Hindustani. The English language or any provincial language may be used if the speaker is unable to speak in Hindustani or whenever permitted by the President.

(b) The proceedings of the Provincial Congress Committees shall ordinarily be conducted in the language of the province concerned. Hindustani may also be used.

#### *Article XVIII.—Transitory Provisions*

(a) On these amendments to the Constitution coming into force the A. I. C. C. shall consist of not more than 166 members appointed as stated in the Appendix.

(b) The members of the Provincial Congress Committees which are functioning or are about to function shall, from among themselves, elect by single transferable vote the members of the A. I. C. C. mentioned in clause (a).

(c) Where a Provincial Congress Committee at present consists of more than 100 members the sitting members of such committee shall elect from among themselves by single transferable vote 100 members including the A. I. C. C. member to constitute the new Provincial Congress Committee under this Constitution.

(d) The Provincial Congress Committee reconstituted under clause (c) shall elect its office-bearers.

(e) The votes at the elections under (b) and (c) may be recorded either at a meeting held for the purpose or on ballot papers sent by post.

(f) All such elections shall be held and a report thereon submitted to the Working Committee on or before the 15th January 1935.

(g) Every Provincial Congress Committee shall, before the 28th of February 1935, submit for the approval of the Working Committee a report on the affairs of its province and a draft constitution for the same not inconsistent with this Constitution and the rules made thereunder.

(h) The Provincial Constitutions shall come into operation on their being approved by the Working Committee.

(i) See Article VIII (c) (i).

(j) See Article VIII (c) (ii).

(k) Notwithstanding Article III and V (a) and (b) (ii) a person otherwise duly qualified shall be eligible for election to an officer or to membership of a committee prior to 1st July 1935.

(l) Notwithstanding the provisions relating to the election of the President by the delegates under this Constitution, the President of the 48th Session of the Congress viz. Sjt. Rajendra Prasad shall continue to hold office as if he was elected hereunder.

(m) The President of the 48th Session of the Congress shall nominate fourteen members of the Working Committee including three General Secretaries and not more than two Treasurers from the members of the present A. I. C. C.

(n) The Working Committee may make such transitory regulation not inconsistent with the foregoing to meet any situation that may arise in the transitional period.

## APPENDIX.

The number of members of the All India Congress Committee allotted to the different provinces in accordance with Arts. VII and XVIII respectively of the Constitution.

Provinces	Maximum of delegates returnable under Art. VI (f) (ii)*	A. I. C. C. members allotted
1. Ajmer	...	3
2. Andhra	...	11
3. Assam	...	2
4. Behar	...	16
5. Bengal and Surma Valley	...	23
6. Berar	...	3
7. Bombay (City)	...	3
8. Burma	...	6
9. Central Provinces (Marathi)	...	3
10. Delhi	...	3
11. Gujarat	...	6
12. Karnatak	...	7
13. Kerala	...	4
14. Mahakoshal (C. P.—Hindustani)	...	6
15. Maharashtra	...	8
16. N. W. F. Province	...	2
17. Punjab	...	16
18. Sindh	...	4
19. Tamil Nadu	...	12
20. United Provinces	...	22
21. Utkal	...	6
Total	...	166

## II

## INSTRUCTIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

For the proper working of the new Constitution and for the guidance of Provincial Congress Committees, the following rules and suggestions were made by the Congress Working Committee at their meeting held at Patna in December 5, 6 and 7, 1934.

*Art II.*

The minimum number required to form a Congress organisation in any locality is fixed to 5 members.

*Art III.—Membership*

Application for membership in form A with duplicate giving all particulars and certificate of membership in form B, all the three may preferably be in one book of triplicate forms.

Laying down of further details as to keeping of registers of members by the primary, the district or the Provincial Congress Committees wherever necessary is left to the P. C. Cs. themselves. The minimum that the constitution requires is that there be one form of application with the primary committee and its duplicate with the P. C. C. and the certificate of membership with the member.

Each primary committee must send to the province the duplicate forms of members enrolled within a month of their enrolment, and the province should send list of such members to the All India Congress Committee office within one month of the receipt of these from the subordinate committees.†

\*These figures will be announced later on by the Working Committee.

†(Note.—The Working Committee suggests to the P. C. Cs. that if possible they should print on the back of the membership certificates the Karachi Congress resolution on Fundamental Rights and Duties and Economic Programme as finally shaped by the A. I. C. C. at Bombay on 6th August 1931 and abridged by the Working Committee at Wardha on 13th June 1934.)

the Provincial Committee concerned. Such report shall be published as soon as possible and not later than four months after the Session.

(c) The General Secretaries shall prepare the report of the A. I. C. C. and the Working Committee during their period of office and submit it, with a full account of the funds which may have come into their hands, to the meeting of the A. I. C. C. immediately before the Annual Session.

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Each primary committee must send to the province the duplicate forms of members enrolled within a month of their enrolment, and the province should send list of such members to the All India Congress Committee office within one month of the receipt of these from the subordinate committees.†

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*Art. IV (c)*

The existing assignment of the Indian States to the different provinces is confirmed by the Working Committee.

*Art V (b)*

Every Congress Committee should keep a list of members who desire to stand as candidates for an office or for membership of a Congress Committee.

*Art V (b) (ii)—Forms of Manual Labour*

The Working Committee is of opinion that the easiest and the most suitable form of manual labour is spinning. It however prescribes alternative forms.

(1) Ginning, (2) Carding, (3) Weaving, (4) Dyeing, (5) Tailoring, (6) Knitting, (7) Carpentry, (8) Smithy, (9) Building work, (10) Nursing, (11) Distributing on foot medical aid in villages, (12) Hawking khadi and the products of village industries, (13) Messenger's work done on foot, (14) Scavenging, (15) Undertaking sanitary measures like cleaning of tanks, wells, etc.

P. C. Cs. will see that the manual labour prescribed is duly performed by insisting upon the production of a certificate in that behalf from persons or Congress office-bearers specially named for the purpose, or take such other steps as they think necessary for the due enforcement of the labour clause.

It shall be open to members to offer their work consolidated for a period of six months. The P. C. Cs. may arrange to receive the labour or its product in such form and such instalments as they may think fit to prescribe having regard to local circumstances. Spinning or other form of manual labour may be performed either directly for any Congress organisation or any institution affiliated to the Congress or recognised in that behalf by the P. C. Cs. from time to time, e. g., local branches of A. I. S. A., the Harijan Sangh, the All India Village Industries Association or any other charitable, philanthropic or public institution.

The P. C. Cs. may arrange for the receipt of the yarn with the A. I. S. A. or its provincial branches. A certificate given by any of these organisations should be deemed sufficient. The A. I. C. C. has some arrangement with the A. I. S. A. already. By this arrangement a person getting certificate of membership of the Association will be considered to have fulfilled the conditions of manual labour as laid down here. (The subscription for the membership of the A. I. S. A. is 1000 yards per month of well-spun yarn of more than 10 counts). Any member of the Congress under Articles III, V (a), and V (b) (i) can however send to the head office of the A. I. S. A. 500 yards of the aforesaid yarn and get a certificate from it and be entitled to stand as a candidate for any office or committee. It must be understood that yarn or any other labour given is in addition to the fee of four annas.

The value of 500 yards of well-spun yarn of 10 counts is half an anna. Other manual labour has got to be of the duration of 8 hours per month the value of which in no case should be less than half an anna. It may very well, and it will always, be more than that.

*Article V, VI, VII, VIII, IX and XI—Time Table*

To avoid any confusion in regard to dates for the enrolment of members, election to the delegates, formation of P. C. Cs, election to the A. I. C. C. and of the Congress President, the following Time Table was framed by the Committee.

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| 1. The Congress ordinarily to meet at the end of February.  |                |
| 2. Announcement of the election of the President.....   | 31st January.  |
| 3. Receipt in the A. I. C. C. office of results of the voting<br>in the provinces in regard to the presidential election... | 24th January.  |
| 4. Meeting of delegates for electing the President.....   | 17th January.  |
| 5. Receipt of lists of delegates by the A. I. C. C. office from<br>the P. C. Cs.....  | 3rd January.   |
| 6. Receipt of names of delegates by the P. C. Cs.<br>from districts   | 21st December. |
| 7. Election of delegates in districts   | 14th December. |
| 8. Receipt by provinces from the A. I. C. C. office<br>of figures of provincial quotas of delegates                         | 14th November. |
| 9. Despatch of above quotas by the A. I. C. C. office   | 7th November.  |



- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| 10. Receipt by the A. I. C. C. office from the P. C. Cs. of lists of qualified Congress members for fixing provincial quota of delegates | 28th October. |
| 11. Receipt by the P. C. Cs of above lists from the Primary Committees   | 18th October. |
| 12. Despatch by the Primary Committees of above lists  | 11th October. |
| 13. Last date for enrolment as a Congress member for being qualified to vote at the elections referred to in this Time Table             | 11th April    |

*Art XI*

For the certificate to be issued by the Secretary of a P. C. C. to one duly elected to the A. I. C. C. see Appendix E.

*Art VIII (b) (iii)*

The Working Committee decided that the provincial contributions to the A. I. C. C. should remain the same as before. The Committee however allowed the money to be paid in two quarterly instalments if any province considered such an arrangement convenient. The last date for paying the first instalment is 28th February, 1935.

*Article XVIII (c) under Cl. (n)—Transitory Provisions*

The Executive Committee of every P. C. C. is at liberty to carry out the reduction prescribed in clause (c) of Art. XVIII by arranging for a proportionate reduction in each district by the vote of the existing members of the P. C. C. representing that district, instead of all the members of the P. C. C., the method of single transferable vote being followed in this case also.

*Art. XVIII (b) and (c)*

Interpreting clauses (b) and (c) of Art XVIII, the Working Committee gave its opinion that in the provinces the reduced quota of members to A. I. C. C. during the transitory period might be elected by the whole P. C. C. as it stood at present, or after the reduction of the P. C. C. to 109 members, wherever such reduction was necessary.

*Art. XVIII (k)*

The transitory provision, Art. XVIII (k) contemplates the formation of Congress Executives and Committees under the new rules on or after the 1st of July 1935. Therefore, even when the new executives are not formed on that date, or till they are formed, in case of vacancies only such members will be entitled to vote as might have been enrolled six months earlier, Art. V (a), and only such members can stand as candidates as may have, in addition, given 3000 yards of well-spun yarn of over ten counts or performed other manual labour as prescribed by the Working Committee at its last meeting, Art. V (b). Any vacancy occurring before 1st July, 1935 shall be filled in accordance with the provisions of the old constitution.

**Habitual Khaddar Wearer**

On a reference being made as to the definition of the term "habitual wearer wholly of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar" in Art. V clause (b) (i), the Working Committee was of opinion that the definition given in the following terms by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in a communication to the Berar P. C. C. correctly represented their view.

1. "When a man wears clothes made of Khadi as a matter of habit, he is a habitual wearer. If, therefore, for any just cause he cannot use khadi on some occasions, he does not cease to be a habitual wearer.

2. But if a person appears at Congress functions in clothes not made of khadi, he will be presumed not to be a habitual wearer of khadi.

3. Habitual wear of clothes made of khadi means all clothes from top to toe made of hand-spun and hand-woven khadi.

4. When it is pointed out to the Chair or when the Chairman of a Congress meeting himself knows that a voter or candidate is not wearing khadi clothes at that meeting, he is bound to rule that the person is not a habitual wearer in spite of his protestation to the contrary."

# Proceedings of the Working Committee

Patna—5th, 6th and 7th December 1934

## Formation of the Committee

On the termination of the Bombay Session of the Indian National Congress, *Babu Rajendra Prasad*, the Congress President, made an announcement on 30th October, 1934, nominating his colleagues on the Working Committee. The following were the members so nominated :

1. *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel* 2. *Dr. M. A. Ansari* 3. *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad* 4. *Mrs. Sarojini Naidu* 5. *Seth Jamnalal Bajaj* 6. *Syt. C. Rajagopalachariar* 7. *Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan* 8. *Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar* 9. *Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya* 10. *Syt. Gangadharrao Deshpande* 11. *Syt. Jairamdas Doulatram* 12. *Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru* 13. *Syed Mahmud* 14. *J. B. Kripalani*.

The last three were nominated as the General Secretaries. *Syt. J. B. Kripalani* was to be the working General Secretary. *Seth Jamnalal Bajaj* was nominated as Treasurer. The President also announced that during the enforced absence of *Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru*, *Syt. K. F. Nariman* was to act as a member of the Committee and *Syt. Jairamdas Doulatram* as one of General Secretaries.

## First Meeting of the Committee

The first meeting of the Working Committee was held at Patna on December 5, 6 and 7, 1934, *Babu Rajendra Prasad* presiding. The following members were present: 1. *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel* 2. *Dr. M. A. Ansari* 3. *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad* 4. *Mrs. Sarojini Naidu* 5. *Syt. C. Rajagopalachariar* 6. *Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar* 7. *Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya* 8. *Syt. Gangadharrao Deshpande* 9. *Syt. K. F. Nariman* 10. *Dr. Syed Mahmud* 11. *Syt. Jairamdas Doulatram* 12. *Syt. J. B. Kripalani*. *Syt. Bhulabhai Deasi* and *Dr. B. C. Roy* attended the meeting by special invitation.

The minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held in Bombay from 20th to 29th October, 1934, were confirmed.

## Expenditure Sanctioned

A statement of accounts of the A. I. C. C. office for October and November, 1934, was placed before the meeting and passed.

There was an excess expenditure of Rs. 285 under "Travelling Expenses". This was sanctioned. Under the same head a further sum of Rs. 1500 was sanctioned for the remaining four months ending with March, 1935.

The Committee passed the following resolutions :—

## Joint Parliamentary Committee Report

Whereas the Congress has after full and earnest consideration resolved that the scheme of future Government of India adumbrated in the White Paper be rejected and the only satisfactory alternative is a constitution drawn up by a Constituent Assembly ;

And the said rejection and demand for a constituent Assembly has been endorsed in a clear and unambiguous manner by the country, at the recent general election to the Legislative Assembly ;

And whereas the proposals made in the Joint Parliamentary Committee report are in several respects even worse than those contained in the White Paper and have been condemned by almost every shade of opinion in India as reactionary and unacceptable ;

And whereas the Joint Parliamentary Committee scheme designed as it is to facilitate and perpetuate the domination and exploitation of this country by an alien people under a costly mask is fraught with greater mischief and danger than even the present constitution ;

This Committee is of opinion that the said scheme should be rejected, well knowing that the rejection must involve the necessity of struggling under the present constitution, humiliating and intolerable as it is, until it is replaced by one framed by a Constituent Assembly in accordance with the Congress resolution on the subject.

This Committee requests the members of the Assembly to reject the scheme of Government sought to be thrust upon India in the name of reform and appeals to the nation to support the Congress in every step that it may decide upon to secure the national objective of Purna Swaraj.

### Immediate Programme

While congratulating the country on the faith and confidence it has shown in the leadership of the Congress by the splendid response it has given in the recent Assembly elections, this Committee is of opinion that all Congress organizations and Congressmen should now concentrate their attention for the next three months on :—

1. enrolment of Congress members and organization of Congress Committees under the new constitution ;
2. collection of accurate and useful local data with a view to assist the revival of village industries under the All India Village Industries Association ;
3. further education of the masses in the ideas contained in the Congress resolution on the fundamental rights and duties and the economic programme passed at Karachi and amplified by the All India Congress Committee at Bombay.

### Condolence

1. This Committee records its heart-felt sorrow over the sad and sudden death of *Syt. B. N. Sasmal*. In him the nation in general and Bengal in particular have lost a true patriot and a great organiser. The Committee conveys its sincere condolence to the bereaved.

2. This Committee conveys its sincere condolence to *Syt. Sarat Chandra Bose* and *Syt. Subhash Chandra Bose* and other members of the family over the passing away of *Rai Bahadur Janakinath Bose*.

### Restrictions on Syt. Subhas Chandra Bose

This Committee deplores the action of the Government for the irritating and humiliating restrictions placed upon the liberty and movements of *Syt. Subhash Chandra Bose* at a time when he was afflicted with great personal loss and sorrow and when the state of his own delicate health should have dictated a more humane treatment.

### Council Members and Khadi

The Working Committee is of opinion that all the Congress members in the legislatures should be habitual wearers of khaddar in terms of Art. V (b) (i) of the Congress constitution and requested them strictly to adhere to this rule.

### Communal Award

On a reference being made by some members of the Nationalist Party in Bengal for a reconsideration of the communal formula of the Congress, in view of the adverse verdict of the Hindu electorate in Bengal expressed through the result of the recent Assembly elections, the Working Committee recorded the following opinion :

“The policy of the Congress in the matter of the Communal Award is already recorded in a resolution passed at the Bombay session of the Indian National Congress. The fact that in some constituencies or in several constituencies in one province some Congress men have chosen to differ from the Congress policy on this matter and have been elected, does not and cannot affect the Congress policy until the same is reconsidered and revised by the Congress, particularly when the said policy has been overwhelmingly endorsed in the country at large. Until then all Congressmen and Congress organizations are expected to abstain from working against the policy of the Congress as solemnly decided”.

### Indian States

The official Congress policy towards the Indian States was re-stated by the President in a public pronouncement which ran as follows :—

“Questions have been raised regarding the attitude of the Congress towards the Indian States. The Congress attitude was defined at the Calcutta session in 1928. No occasion has arisen since then to make any pronouncement on the Congress attitude. Therefore the Calcutta resolution must be taken as the Congress policy. The resolution runs as follows :

"This Congress urges on the Ruling Princes of the Indian States to introduce responsible government based on representative institutions in the States and to immediately issue proclamations or enact laws guaranteeing elementary and fundamental rights of citizenship such as rights of association, free speech, free Press, and security of person and property. This Congress further assures the people of the Indian States of its sympathy with and support to their legitimate and peaceful struggle for the attainment of full responsible government in the States'.

"My attention has also been drawn to a circular of the Travancore Government in which responsible leaders are supposed to have disapproved of Congressmen in Indian States forming Congress Committees. So far as I am aware, no responsible Congress leader has expressed such an opinion. On the contrary there would be surprise in Congress circles if Congress Committees and activities, especially of a constructive nature, were prohibited. The traditional attitude of the Congress has been one of friendliness towards Indian States and of non-interference with their administration, and it is but meet to expect reciprocity from the States."

#### Assignment of Dhalbhum

On the question of assignment of Dhalbhum, the Committee decided that the present arrangement should not be disturbed. Dhalbhum, therefore, remains as before a part of the Congress province of Behar.

#### Congress Socialists

The resolutions of the All India Congress Socialist Conference were placed before the Committee. A letter from the U. P. Provincial Congress Committee enclosing copies of *Acharya Narendra Deva's* resolution at the P. C. C. was also placed before the Committee.

## APPENDIX A

### Fundamental Rights and Duties and Economic Programme

The Karachi Congress resolution on Fundamental Rights and Economic Programme was varied as follows by the All India Congress Committee in its meeting held in Bombay on August 6, 7, and 8, 1931 :—

"This Congress is of opinion that to enable the masses to appreciate what 'Swaraj', as conceived by the Congress, will mean to them, it is desirable to state the position of the Congress in a manner easily understood by them. In order to end the exploitation of the masses, political freedom must include real economic freedom of the starving millions. The Congress therefore declares that any constitution which may be agreed to on its behalf should provide, or enable the Swaraj Government to provide, the following.

#### Fundamental Rights and Duties

1. (i) Every citizen of India has the right of free expression of opinion, the right of free association and combination, and the right to assemble peacefully and without arms for purpose not opposed to law or morality.

(ii) Every citizen shall enjoy freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess and practise his religion, subject to public order and morality.

(iii) The culture, language and script of the minorities and of the different linguistic areas shall be protected.

(iv) All citizens are equal before the law, irrespective of religion, caste, creed or sex.

(v) No disability attaches to any citizen by reason of his or her religion, caste, creed or sex, in regard to public employment, office of power or honour, and in the exercise of any trade or calling.

(vi) All citizens have equal rights and duties in regard to wells, tanks, roads, schools and places of public resort, maintained out of State or local funds, or dedicated by private persons for the use of the general public.

(vii) Every citizen has the right to keep and bear arms, in accordance with regulations and reservations made in that behalf.

- (viii) No person shall be deprived of his liberty nor shall his dwelling or property be entered, sequestered, or confiscated, save in accordance with law.
- (ix) The State shall observe neutrality in regard to all religions.
- (x) The franchise shall be on the basis of universal adult suffrage.
- (xi) The State shall provide for free and compulsory primary education.
- (xii) The State shall confer no titles.
- (xiii) There shall be no capital punishment.
- (xiv) Every citizen is free to move throughout India and to stay and settle to any part thereof, to acquire property and to follow any trade or calling, and to be treated equally with regard to legal prosecution or protection in all parts of India.

### Labour

- 2. (a) The organisation of economic life must conform to the principle of justice, to the end that it may secure a decent standard of living.
- (b) The State shall safeguard the interests of industrial workers and shall secure for them, by suitable legislation and in other ways, a living wage, healthy conditions of work, limited hours of labour, suitable machinery for the settlement of disputes between employers and workmen, and protection against the economic consequences of old age, sickness and unemployment.
- 3. Labour to be freed from serfdom and conditions bordering on serfdom.
- 4. Protection of women workers, and especially, adequate provision for leave during maternity period.
- 5. Children of school going age shall not be employed in mines and factories.
- 6. Peasants and workers shall have the right to form unions to protect their interest.

### Taxation and Expenditure

- 7. The system of land tenure and revenue and rent shall be reformed and an equitable adjustment made of the burden on agricultural land, immediately giving relief to the smaller peasantry, by a substantial reduction of agricultural rent and revenue now paid by them, and in case of uneconomic holdings, exempting them from rent, so long as necessary, with such relief as may be just and necessary to holders of small estates affected by such exemption or reduction in rent, and to the same end, imposing a graded tax on net incomes from land above a reasonable minimum.
- 8. Death duties on a graduated scale shall be levied on property above a fixed minimum.
- 9. There shall be drastic reduction of military expenditure so as to bring it down to at least one half of the present scale.
- 10. Expenditure and salaries in civil departments shall be largely reduced. No servant of the State, other than specially employed experts and the like, shall be paid above a certain fixed figure, which should not ordinarily exceed Rs. 500 per month.
- 11. No duty shall be levied on salt manufactured in India.

### Economic and Social Programme

- 12. The State shall protect indigenous cloth ; and for this purpose pursue the policy of exclusion of foreign cloth and foreign yarn from the country and adopt such other measures as may be found necessary. The State shall also protect other indigenous industries, when necessary, against foreign competition.
- 13. Intoxicating drinks and drugs shall be totally prohibited, except for medicinal purposes.
- 14. Currency and exchange shall be regulated in the national interest.
- 15. The State shall own or control key industries and services, mineral resources, railways, waterways, shipping and other means of public transport.
- 16. Relief of agricultural indebtedness and control of usury—direct and indirect.
- 17. The State shall provide for the military training of citizens so as to organise a means of national defence apart from the regular military forces.

## APPENDIX B

### Constructive Programme of the Congress

The following resolution on Constructive Programme was adopted by the Working Committee of the Congress which met at Wardha on June 12 and 13, 1934 :



In view of the removal of the ban on Congress organizations, the Working Committee advises responsible Congress workers to expedite the reorganization of Congress Committees within their respective jurisdictions and engage Congressmen in the various constructive activities, particularly

- (a) production of khaddar through self-spinning and spread thereof, within the area of production, and such further assistance to the All-India Spinners' Association as is within their power.
- (b) removal of untouchability
- (c) promotion of inter-communal unity
- (d) promotion of total abstinence from intoxicating drinks and drugs and advocacy of prohibition
- (e) promotion of education on national lines
- (f) promotion of development of useful small industries
- (g) organization and reconstruction of village life in its economic, educational, social and hygienic aspects
- (h) spread of useful knowledge among the adult population in the villages.
- (i) organization of industrial labour
- (j) and such other activities as may commend themselves to Congress workers and organizations, which are not inconsistent with the Congress objective or general policy and which will not involve any form of civil resistance.

## NOTES

### Village Industries' Association

In accordance with the Congress resolution in this behalf Gandhiji issued the following statement to the Press on December 15, 1934 announcing the formation of the Board of Management of the Village Industries' Association :

The Congress resolution in the matter contemplated the creation, of a self-acting, independent and non-political organisation, consisting of men and women whose primary aim in life would be identification with the villagers and promotion of their welfare. The following friends, having understood the implications of their obligation, have consented to form the Association of which they become both foundation members and the first Board of Management—Sjt. Shrikrishandas Jajoo, President and Treasurer ; Mr. J. C. Kumarappa, Organiser and Secretary ; Shrimati Gosiben Captain : Dr. Khan Saheb, Sri Shoorji Vallabhdas, Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh, Shri Laxmidas Purshottam and Shri Shankerlal Banker. They will have power to add to their number.

The function of the Board will be to define the programme of village reconstruction work from time to time, to co-ordinate the policy followed in the different centres, to collect, collate and circulate the information gathered from workers or agents as to the actual condition of existing village industries, both those that may be flourishing or those that may be perishing, also as to the economic, moral and physical condition of villagers, to carry on research work with the help of specialists and experts and to discover and create a market for the surplus village manufactures. The Board will collect such funds as may be required for the due discharge of its functions. As the secret of the success of the policy of this Association will be in making the villagers self-reliant and self-supporting, its programme must not be costly. The idea is, therefore, to work with as little outlay as possible.

It follows, therefore, that decentralisation must be the key note of the Board's policy and the area will be divided into as many areas as there may be workers or agents who will work, organise and be responsible to the Board for the carrying out of its programme in their respective areas.

The workers or agents will be selected from those who, consistently with their preoccupation of earning their livelihood, will give their whole time to the work of the Association. So far as possible the agents will be honorary. They will collect what funds may be necessary for the organisation of their areas. It may be that the Board will not get many unpaid agents. It will be satisfied as a start even if a few districts are thoroughly organised and demonstrated to be economically and otherwise successful. The lists of agents will be published from time to time.

The Board cannot carry on research work without the help of experts. And since experts cannot be expected to give their whole time and thought to the work

of the Association I sent requests to several friends if they would allow their names to appear on the Board of Advisers.

So far the following friends have kindly consented to be on it—Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore, Sir J. C. Bose, Sir P. C. Roy, Sir C. V. Raman, Mr. V. Ramdas Pantulu, Mr. Jamal Mohamed Saheb, Seth Ghanshyamdas Birla, Sir Purhottamdas Thakurdas, Sir S. Pochkanawala, Prof. Sam Higginbotham, Dr. Jivaraj Mehta, Dr. M. A. Ansari, Major General Sir Robert Macarrison, Dr. Rajab Alli V. Patel, Dr. S. Subba Rao, Dr. B. C. Roy, & Dr. Purushottam Patel. Wardha has been chosen as the headquarters because of its being centrally situated, being a junction station and being rather a glorified village than a city.

Although I have several names before me of friends who have undertaken to act as agents to the Association I would request these correspondents as well as others to offer their names to the Organiser and Secretary, Shri J. C. Kumarappa, Wardha. I have transferred to him all the names and papers received by me".

## Constitution of

### The All India Village Industries' Association

The Association contemplated by the resolution and regarding village industries passed by the Indian National Congress at its session held on 27th October, 1934 at Bombay and known as the All India Village Industries' Association' i. e. Akhil Bharat Gram Udyog Sangha, is hereby formed.

The object of the Association shall be the village reorganisation and reconstruction including the revival, encouragement and improvement of village industries and the moral and physical advancement, and for the fulfilment of its object the Association shall raise funds to carry on research work, publish Literature, organise propaganda, establish agencies, devise measures for the improvement of village tools and do everything that may be necessary for the furtherance of its object.

The Association shall work under the guidance and advice of Gandhiji.

The Association shall consist of (a) board of management (b) members (c) agents (d) honorary workers (e) paid whole-time workers and (f) associates and shall also have a board of advisers.

#### Membership

Any person who subscribes to the pledge hereto annexed and is recommended by a member or any one of the duly authorised agents of the Association and whose admission is approved by the board of management shall be a member.

Any person who sympathises with the object of the Association, and pays an annual subscription of not less than Rs. 100 shall be an associate and any person who pays a lump sum of Rs. 1,000 may be enrolled as life associate.

Advisers shall be those who consistently with their pre-occupations agree to give the free benefit of their special knowledge to the Association whenever they are consulted.

#### Board of Management

The following foundation members shall be the first board of management to hold office for three years: Shri Shrikrishnadas Jajoo, J. C. Kumarappa, Shri Goshi Ben, M. S. Captain, Dr. Khan Saheb, Shoorji Vallabdas, Dr. Profulla Chandra Ghosh, Shri Laxmidas Purshottam Ashar and Shankarlal Banker. Thereafter the members shall elect the Board of Management to hold office for a period of three years.

The Board of Management shall be in full charge of the affairs of the Association to hold funds and properties for it and shall have power to add to their number from among duly enrolled members provided that the total strength does not exceed twenty.

The Board of Management shall maintain proper books of accounts which shall be duly audited and which shall be open to public inspection.

#### Board's Power

The Board of Management shall have power to frame bye-laws for the carrying out of the objects of the Association.

With the exception of the objects clause, it will be open to the Board of Management to alter or amend or annul to this constitution by the consent of three-fourths of the then existing members of the Board of Management.

The board of management shall have power to appoint trustees and to hold funds and properties on behalf of the Association,

### The Pledge

Having read the constitution and rules of the All-India Village Industries' Association I offer to be a member thereof, and God helping, promise to devote the best part of my energy and talents to the furtherance of its object, which is the all-round welfare of the villages of India.

So long as I remain a member of the Association, I shall not take part in any campaign of civil disobedience.

In the discharge of my duties I shall seek the assistance and co-operation of all those who may be willing to give them irrespective of differences in politics.

To the best of my ability I shall strive to live up to the ideals of the Association and prefer the use of village manufactures to any other.

In the prosecution of my obligations to the villagers, I shall recognise no distinction between man and man.

## Assembly Elections

The Congress achieved a phenomenal success at the recent Assembly elections. It has captured all seats in Madras, Orissa, U. P., and C. P., which were open to the general electorates. In many constituencies the Congress candidates won their seats by enormous majorities, and in some cases the majority was so great that their opponents had to forfeit even their securities.

The Congress lost 2 seats in the Punjab and 3 seats in Bengal, one seat in Ajmer and one seat in Bombay. Out of these seven, four were lost to Congressmen of the Nationalist Party who must be included among Congress members inasmuch as they are pledged to vote with the Congress in all matters except the question of the Communal Award. The Congress has also captured some of the Muslim seats.

The success of the Congress at the polls proved beyond doubt that it was the only organisation in India which represented the people at large and that the strength and efficacy of its organisation remained unimpaired in spite of the terrible repression during the C. D. movement.

The names of successful Congress candidates together with the names of constituencies from which they have been returned are given below. The list also contains the names of other elected members who will support the Congress in the Assembly.

### Names of Congress Candidates Returned to the Assembly

**Assam**—1. Mr. N. BARDOLOI—Upper Assam. 2. Mr. B. K. DAS—Sylhet.

**Bengal**—3. Mr. SURYA KUMAR SHOME—Dacca—Mymensingh. 4. Mr. ABDUL YALIL BAQUI—Rajshahi.

**Bihar**—5. Mr. DIP NARAIN SINHA—Bhagalpur—Purnea (Unopposed), 6. Mr. SRI KRISHNA SINHA—Monghyr—Gaya, 7. Mr. ANUGRAHANARAIN SINHA—Patna—Shahabad, 8. Mr. SATYANARAIN SINHA—Darbhanga—Saran, 9. Mr. BEPIN BIHAR VARMA—Champaran—Muzaffarpur, 10. Mr. RAMNARAIN SINGH—Chota Nagpur.

**Bombay**—11. Dr. DESHMUKH—Bombay City. 12. Mr. BHULABHAI J. DESAI—Gujrat, 13. Mr. N. V. GADGIL—Maharashtra. 14. Mr. K. JEDHI—Maharashtra 15. Mr. S. K. HOSMANI—Karnatak.

**C. P.**—16. SETH GOVIND DAS—C. P. Hindi. 17. Mr. GHANSHYAM SINGH GUPTA—C. P. Hindi. 18. M. V. ABHYANKAR—C. P. Marathi. 19. Mr. SETH SHEODAS DAGA—C. P. Landholders (Unopposed).

**Delhi**—20. Mr. ASAF ALI.

**Madras**—21. Mr. V. V. GIRI—Ganjam—Vizagapatam. 22. Mr. NAGESWAR RAO PANTULU—Godavari—Krishna. 23. Prof. N. G. RANGA—Nellur—Guntur. 24. Mr. MUTHURANGA MUDALIAR—Chingleput S. Arcot. 26. Dr. T. S. S. RAJAN—Tanjor—Trichinopoly. 27. Mr. AVANASALINGHAM CHETTY—Coimbatore—Salem. 28. Mr. SAMUEL AERON—Malabar S. Canara. 29. Mr. P. S. KUMARASWAMI RAJA—Madura—Rammad. 30. Mr. ANANTASAYANA IYENGAR—Ceded Districts. 31. Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTY—Madras Indian Commerce.

**N. W. F.**—32. Dr. KHAN SAHIB.

**Orissa**—33. Mr. B. Das. 34. Mr. NILKANTHA DAS.

**Punjab**—35. LALA SHAMLAL—Ambala.

**U. P.**—36. Dr. BHAGWAN DAS—Seven cities (Unopposed). 37. SARDAR JOGENDRA SINGH—Fyzabad. 38. CHAUDHURY RAGHUBIR NARAIN SINGH—Meerut (Unopposed). 39. Mr. MOHANLAL SAXENA—Lucknow. 40. Mr. SRI PRAKASA—Allahabad Jhansi. 41. Mr. SRI KISHEN DUTT PALIWAL—Agra. 42. MUNSHI ISWAR SARAN—Benares Gorakhpur (Unopposed). 43. Pt. GOVIND BALLABH PANT—Rohilkhund—Kumaon (Unopposed). 44. Mr. T. K. SHERWANI—Agra Muslim constituency.

**Congress Nationalists—Bengal**—1. Mr. SARAT CHANDRA BOSE—Calcutta (Unopposed). 2. Mr. P. N. BANERJEE—Calcutta Suburbs. 3. Mr. AKHIL CHANDRA DUTT—Chittagong-Rajshahi. 4. Mr. LAKSHMIKANTA MOITRA—Presidency.

**Berar**—5. Mr. M. S. ANEY.

**Punjab**—6. Pt. FAQIR CHAND—Jullunder.

**Sind**—7. Mr. LALCHAND NAVALRAI.

**Muslim Unity Board**—1. Mr. MOHAMMAD AHMED KAZMI—Meerut. 2. MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI—Seven cities. 3. Mr. AZHAR ALI—Fyzabad. 4. SYED MURTAZA SAHEB—South Madras. 5. HAZI ABDUL SATTAR SAHEB—West Coast, Madras. 6. Mr. UMRAH SHAH—North Madras. 7. Mr. GAUBA [Ahrar Party]—Punjab.

**Sikh**—1. SARDAR MANGAL SINGH—East Punjab. 2. SARDAR SANT SINGH—West Punjab.

Congress.....44 ; Congress Nationalists.....7 ; Muslim Unity Board.....6 ; Ahrar Party.....1 ; Sikhs.....2 ;—Total 60.

#### Gandhiji's Proposed Visit to the Frontier

Gandhiji had been desiring for some time to visit the Frontier to see for himself how far the Khudai Khidmatgars (the Red Shirt organisation) had imbibed under the leadership of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan the spirit of non-violence. He had also conceived the idea of trying to serve them by helping them to organise their village industries. As usual not desiring to embarrass the Government, Gandhiji addressed a letter to the Viceroy informing him of the contemplated visit. The correspondence that ensued has been released by Gandhiji for publication.

In a statement to the Press Gandhiji wanted the public against thinking that the correspondence was closed or that he was waiting for the first opportunity to court arrest by proceeding to the Frontier in the teeth of the Viceroy's order to the contrary. He said, "I have no desire to offer civil disobedience at the present moment. My object is, as a humble servant of God, to meet those on the Frontier who call themselves servants of God and to know them. The urge has become all the greater now that their brave leader is under arrest. But my immediate object cannot be served by a defiance of authority. Therefore, I propose to try all possible constitutional means to obtain the necessary permission. If suspicion of my motive is the cause of the refusal I shall try to disarm the suspicion. My endeavour is to avoid every occasion for civil disobedience of authority in so far as it is humanly possible. I would therefore ask the public in general and the friends of the Frontier in particular to hold themselves in patience. They will know in proper time what is to happen finally."

The following is the correspondence :—

*Gandhiji's letter to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy, dated, Wardha, November 15, 1934 :*

Dear Friend,

His Excellency has probably seen the public statement I have made of my intention to visit the Frontier Province as soon as possible consistently with my pre-occupations. I am likely to be free after the middle of December. My object in wishing to visit the Frontier Province is to be with its people, to know them at first hand and to understand how far the teaching of non-violence by Khan Sahab Abdul Gaffar Khan has permeated his followers. It is also my intention to help them in the development of their village industries. I need hardly say that I have no desire whatever to inculcate among the Frontier people the spirit of disobedience (civil or otherwise) of authority.

Though I know that there is no legal bar against my entering the Frontier Province, I have no desire to do anything that may bring me in conflict with the Government. It is my earnest effort to avoid such conflict in so far as it is humanly possible.

Will you kindly ascertain His Excellency's wishes in the matter and let me know them ?

*The Private Secretary's reply dated, New Delhi, November 25 :*

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I am desired to communicate to you His Excellency's wishes in regard to your proposed visit to the Frontier Province. His Excellency is glad that you have consulted him in this matter and notes that you have no desire to do anything that may bring you into conflict with the Government. He has discussed the question with the Government of the North-West Frontier Province and with his Council and regrets that he and they are unanimously of opinion that it is not desirable for you to pay a visit to the Frontier Province at the present time. He trusts that you will act in accordance with his wishes.

*Gandhiji's letter to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy, dated, Wardha, November 28.*

Dear Mr. Mievile,

I must thank you for your prompt reply to my letter of the 15th instant. But I cannot help saying that the decision come to in regard to my contemplated visit to the Frontier Province is painful and places me in a very awkward position. In that sense perhaps the decision may be regarded as unfortunate.

The only ray of hope I see in your letter is that the undesirability of my visit refers to "the present time". Could you please give me a definition of the expression? Could you please tell me, if my enquiry is not inappropriate, why it is considered undesirable for me to visit the Frontier?

Whilst it is my earnest desire to abide by His Excellency's wishes I may be pardoned for repeating what I have said in my letter of the 15th instant—that I could do so in so far as it was humanly possible. This is a point which your letter under reply seems to have overlooked.

*The Private Secretary to the Viceroy's reply, dated, New Delhi, December 2 :*

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

Many thanks for your letter of the 28th November.

In reply I am desired by His Excellency to say that the expression "at the present time" implies that His Excellency's decision will hold good till he is satisfied that conditions are such as to render a visit unobjectionable. His Excellency's decision was arrived at after a full consideration of the events of recent years and present conditions.

Gandhiji's telegram to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy, dated Wardha, December 7 : "Whilst I am prayerfully considering my duty regarding the contemplated visit to the Frontier seeing that garbled reports of our correspondence have appeared in the Press unless His Excellency has objection I would like to publish the same." Gandhi.

The Private Secretary's reply, dated, New Delhi, December 10 : Your telegram of December 8. His Excellency has no objection to the publication of the correspondence.—Private Secretary, Viceroy.

#### **Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and Dr. Satyapal**

Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, member of the Working Committee, and Dr. Satyapal, an old member of the Working Committee and President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, were arrested and convicted on charges of sedition under section 124 I. P. C. Khan Sahab was sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment for a speech delivered at the Nagpada Neighbourhood House in Bombay on October 24, 1934. Dr. Satyapal has been sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for one year for a speech delivered at Delhi supporting the candidature of the Congress nominee, Mr. Asaf Ali, in the recent Assembly elections.

The convictions of these two prominent Congressmen deserve notice not merely because of the distinguished position they held in the political life of the country but because they give clear indication of Government policy in regard to the Congress. The severity of sentence was in no case mitigated although during their trial both the Khan Sahab and Dr. Satyapal had made it clear that as loyal Congressmen they had no intention to commit a breach of the law and seek imprisonment in accordance with the present policy of the Congress.



# The Indian National Congress

Abdul Gaffar Nagar—Bombay—26th to 28th October 1934

## Opening Day's Proceedings

"A golden sun had just disappeared under the waveless sea; late moon was still under the eastern horizon; the stars were twinkling from a darkening sky; when inside a circle of blazing lights India's annual festival of freedom began to-day on the huge grounds specially laid out on Worli sea face—thus describes the *U. P. Special Service* the 48th session of the Indian National Congress which met at Bombay on the 26th October, 1934. The gorgeously proportioned partitions were packed to overcrowding by enthusiastic delegates and visitors who had come from the far off corners of Hindusthan. The pandal was a model of generous planning and elegant decoration. The President's 'Shamiana' in the middle of the dais, on which the hosts of the Congress were seated, and the octagonal rostrum situated in the middle of the pandal were brightly coloured and brilliantly lighted. They were perfect pieces of delicate architecture. Three gates opened into the pandal and through all of them the participants of this great concourse poured in even an hour before the proceedings were to commence. Smart volunteers in khaki, and sweet Desh Sevikas in orange stood at the gates and all along the roads and regulated admission and accommodation. The rushing torrent of humanity which poured through every gate soon found its pool and settled quietly down. The flood lights mounted on the gates threw their blinding beams right to the centre of the pandal. The powerful lights on the gateways inside the pandal added to the illumination and all darkness vanished inside the enclosure.

Shortly before seven, the playing of music in the President's camp announced the commencement of the Presidential procession. The whole gathering turned east and all eyes were fixed on Deshbandhu gate. A few minutes later, the procession emerged out of the blazing arch. Floodlights concentrated their beams and the procession moved in a stream of light. Volunteers in uniform marched first, playing bagpipes and beating drums. Desh Sevikas came behind. They were followed by the leaders who were marching slowly, two abreast. Dr. Ansari, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mahatmaji, Sardar Patel, Abdul Gaffar Khan, Dr. B. C. Roy, Maulana Azad, Pandit Malaviya, Sardar Sardul Singh and other leaders marched ahead. Babu Rajendra Prasad escorted by Mr. K. F. Nariman, with a simple garland round his neck marched to the centre of the procession. Other leaders brought up the rear.

Coming to the centre of the pandal, the procession turned to the right to proceed to the shamiana. A bevy of Desh Sevikas furnished a guard of honour and the procession marched under an arch of upraised lathi. Reaching the Shamiana the President and other leaders seated themselves in their respective places. The proceedings commenced.

## SESSION BEGINS

Eager necks craned, eager eyes scanned and eager ears listened to catch the start of the proceedings. The tuning of the 'tamburag' on the rostrum, broadcast by the loud speakers, riveted attention on the rostrum. A second later, the songs of salutation began. A soft wind, as the sweet strains floated down and, spreading to the farthest ends, turned the heart strings of the hearers to the sterner song of freedom that was coming from the President Babu Rajendra Prasad.

## MR. NARIMAN'S ADDRESS

Welcome songs over, Mr. Nariman mounted the rostrum and delivered his welcome address. The night was calm, the air was still and the loud speakers worked perfectly. Both Mr. Nariman and Rajendra Babu were heard with rapt attention. Mr. Nariman's address was frequently cheered. When he paid a tribute to Rajendra Babu, when he referred to Pandit Jawaharlal, when he appealed to Pandit Malaviyaji to accept the Congress verdict on the Communal Award, when

he referred to Gandhiji as the guiding star of the Congress, Mr. Nariman was lustily cheered. After the finish of the welcome address, Rajen Babu was formally installed as President and decorated with the badge of office. Sj. Jairamdas Doulatram next read the messages of good-will and sympathy.

#### THE LEADERS

Prominent among those noticed on the dais were *Mahatmaji, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. Ansari, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Pandit Malaviya, Dr. Syed Mahmud, Sj. Rajagopalachari, Dr. B. C. Roy, Mr. Tusar Kanti Ghose, Editor. "Amritabazar Patrika", Mr. S. A. Brelvi, Editor, "Bombay Chronicle", Mr. C. R. Srinivasan, Editor "Swadeshmitram. Mr. Ramananda Chattarjee, "Editor, Modern Review", Sardul Singh Caveeshar, Mr. M. S. Aney, Dr. Choitram Gidwani, Swami Govindanand, Messrs. Prakasham, Bhulabhai Desai, K. F. Nariman, T. C. Goswami, J. C. Gupta, Nagindas Master, Swami Anand, Pattabi Sitaramiah, Acharya Kripalani, Messrs. Purusottam Tricumdas, Amritlal Sheth, Editor, Janmabhoomi, Satyendra Nath Mazumdar, Editor, "Anandabazar Patrika", Babu Sriprakash, Pandit Govindkant Malaviya, Pandit Radhakant Malaviya, Pandit Govindvallav Pant, Seth Govindas, Babu Mathuraprasad, Babu Dipnarain Singh, Mr. Nageswar Rao Pantulu.*

#### PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

The President, on arising to speak, was greeted with tremendous cheers. Copies of the Presidential address, printed in Hindi, English, and Urdu were distributed among delegates and visitors. The President himself delivered a speech in Hindi, referring to selected portions of his printed speech. The President's reference to the absence of *Pandit Jawaharlal* and *Sj. Subhas Bose* was greeted with appreciative cheers. As the President concluded his speech, some delegates brought to the notice of the President the plight of Ajmer delegates, lying at the northern gate, offering Satyagraha. The President made a statement saying that his offer of enquiry into their grievances was refused and they had continued Satyagraha obstinately. He could not reverse the decision of his predecessor.

#### Mr. Nariman's Welcome Speech

Following is the full text of the speech delivered by Mr. K. F. Nariman, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in welcoming the delegates to the 48th session of the Indian National Congress :—

"Brother and Sister Delegates and Friends,

"On behalf of the Reception Committee of the 48th session of the Indian National Congress and on behalf of the citizens of Bombay I offer you a most cordial and hearty welcome to this commercial capital of India and this centre of Congress politics. Nearly 16 years have passed since Bombay had the honour of holding a special session of the Indian National Congress and all these years have been years of strenuous activity and steady advance in the field of politics. It is, indeed, a noteworthy coincidence that when the Congress met in 1918 it was to discuss and record the Nation's verdict on the scheme of constitutional Reforms which the British Cabinet were anxious to introduce into India. Only the previous year, the historic pledge about self-government had been given and Mr. Montagu had come to India on a special Deputation. On the basis of the Report that he submitted a Bill was drawn up embodying recommendations intending to give Indians a larger share in their own Government. The representatives of the nation who had assembled then rejected the reforms as disappointing, inadequate and unsatisfactory. Despite the opposition of the nation, the Reforms Bill was passed but it had failed to bring peace in India which British statesmen had fondly hoped for. The Act that was then passed contained a provision that more reforms would be granted after a lapse of ten years and in accordance with that provision, an unending procession of commissions and committees have been coming to this country and making reports and recommendations. As if to supplement them there were three more big gatherings glorified under the name of Round Table Conference and as a result of the combined labour of all these conclaves of statesmen and diplomats there has emerged a new scheme of reforms which is to-day on the legislative anvil. The need has arisen to-day again for the nation to stand up as one man and reject every attempt of the imperialists to forge tighter links to bind India to the chariot wheels of the Empire. And Bombay is legitimately proud that the delegates of the

nation are to-day assembled to re-iterate their determination to be free, to review their allegiance to the ideal of "Purna Swaraj".

### PRINCE AMONG WORKERS

"It is another noteworthy coincident that three Bombay sessions of the Congress should have been presided over by three illustrious sons of Bihar. Lord Sinha presided over the 1915 session and Syed Hussain Imam guided the deliberations of the special session in 1918. To-day we have the good fortune of meeting under the presidentship of Babu Rajendra Prasad, the foremost leader of Bihar—a peasant in his garments but a prince among public workers. The unanimous vote by which he has been elected to guide the destinies of the nation during the coming year is a testimony to the esteem and affection in which his countrymen from one end to the another hold him. In his own province the name of Rajendra Babu is a name to conjure with. The call of national leadership has come to him in the midst of a trying time. His own family has suffered shocking bereavements. And he himself is the victim of a nerve-racking illness which with every little exertion becomes more malignant. If in the midsts of these ordeals he has cheerfully responded to the nation's call and taken his place of responsibility it is only an indication of his unbending devotion to duty and his utter readiness to shoulder every burden in the cause of India's freedom.

### THE ILLUSTRIOUS DEAD

"As we meet to-day, it is but natural that we should miss the sagacious counsel of some of our trusted leaders and dear colleagues. Sj. Vithalbhai Patel, who on the last occasion acted as the Chairman of the Reception Committee is with us no more. Broken by disease but with his faith in India's freedom bright and steady, he went to a foreign land where he had hoped to recoup his health and to come back to take his due and proper share in the struggle for freedom with redoubled vigour, but death snatched him away even before his dream could be realised and he expired in Switzerland with a last exhortation to his countrymen not to relax the fight for liberty. In the 25 years of his public life Sj. Vithalbhai Patel proved himself the most doughty champion of India's emancipation and in parliamentary warfare he proved to be a master tactician without a peer.

"Another great figure has passed away in Deshapriya Sen-Gupta on whom had fallen the mantle of Chittaranjan Das. Bengal will sorely miss leadership and the nation his sterling services.

"In Madras death has prematurely claimed Sj. A Rangaswami Iyengar, an ex-General Secretary of the Congress and later on of the old Swaraj Party. Ever since the decline of the Civil Disobedience campaign, Mr. Iyengar had busied himself with the revival of parliamentary warfare and it is a matter for great regret that the Parliamentary Board has been deprived even at the outset of his valuable guidance.

"Dr. Annie Besant has also passed away without witnessing the realisation of her heart's desire to see India free.

"A cruel fate has, indeed, deprived India of the services of these leaders but they have left behind them a record of devotion and service which must inspire us to further and greater efforts.

### BOMBAY'S CONTRIBUTION

"In 1918 when the Congress met in this city, Bombay was the centre of the moderate school of politics. The objective of the Congress was the attainment of "Self-Government within the British Empire" by all constitutional means. During the years which had led to that session, the spirit of liberalism was the dominating force in Indian politics. Sir Phiroze Shah Mehta and Gopal Krishna Gokhale were the giants of those days. And the weapon in their armoury ranged from "humble petitions" to "great disapprovals" and emphatic protests. The Indian politics have far advanced from that stage. The object is no longer the attainment of self-government within the British empire. It is the achievement of "Purna Swaraj." The means are no longer memorials or petitions, but peaceful and legitimate direct action. And in working this change it has been Bombay's privilege that she has always been in vanguard. Shortly after the introduction of the Montagu-Reforms, Gandhiji entered the political arena with his matchless weapon of Satyagraha. At the Nagpur Congress he pleaded for his adoption as a means for

India's emancipation but before it could be given a trial it was withdrawn in 1922. For eight years from that day, the Nation was fitting itself for the struggle and when the ultimatum given at Calcutta expired on 31st December, 1929, the Congress unfurled the banner of Independence and called upon the Nation to assert and win her freedom by the adoption of Satyagraha. But on account of the success with which she organised the boycott of the Prince of Wales and the generous enthusiasm with which she contributed over 60 lakhs to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, Bombay took over the leadership of the Congress struggle in 1920. When Satyagraha was adopted as the means for implementing the Lahore resolution, Bombay set about evolving new tactics and to her belongs the proud distinction of having fashioned a technique under which the forces of nationalism were unable to score their most spectacular victories. The organisation of mammoth processions on a scale and with numbers hitherto unknown was the first step in mobilising public opinion in the cause of the struggle for freedom. These perfectly peaceful and orderly demonstrations were often illegal and always defiant and gave the first assurances to the mass mind that against alert and active public opinion the forces of constituted authority were helpless. From mere processions and demonstrations the raids and the marches were the next step. The quiet assertion of popular strength developed into non-violent offensive where it quickly developed into a test between the capacity of the police to inflict physical injury and the capacity of the Congress volunteers to bear it. And at hundreds of places in this city, during those fateful months, did the non-violent soldiers of freedom score over the servants of Law and Order. The initial successes that attended these efforts galvanised the city and the planning of mass offensives thereafter became easier from the squating of the Sholapur Day procession to the Zenda Vandum on the Azad Maidan and from the dignified defiance of Police orders at Bori Bunder to the dashing raids on the Wadala Salt pans it was a normal transition. Week after week the forces of authority got more and more dispirited and demoralised and the Congress was winning all along the lines. While processions and raids implicated the more spectacular defeats on the forces of Government it was the organisation of boycott and the intensification of picketting that kept up a steady and crushing pressure over them. The cheerfulness with which many merchants came forth to sacrifice their immediate interests, the generous enthusiasm with which others came to help the bravery with which Congress volunteers discharged their duty often at grave personal risks—all these made boycott effective and elevated picketting into a major front. Government's remedy was always to resort to brute force and every exhibition of brute force meant an additional triumph to the Congress and fresh accession of public strength. The rapidity with which Ambulance Association sprang up and the spontaneity with which the Congress Hospital and other relief agencies were organised, were unmistakable testimonies as to on which side the nation was ranging itself. Hundreds of persons were injured in every clash with the Police but still thousands were anxious to participate in every demonstration. And on all these occasions when the obscure Congress volunteer was called upon to make the supreme sacrifice, to lay down his life calmly and unresistingly as a sacred offering in a sacred cause, Bombay with her hundreds of thousands of men, women and children—Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Parsies and Jews, felt moved and acted like a single being. She prided herself in the purity of her struggle; she gloried in the martyr's strength and sacrifice. Such were the days when Harjivan Lalji fell with the Flag at Bori Bunder, Babu Genu was crushed by the wheels of a foreign cloth lorry in Kalvadevi and Kale Shanker sank under a Police lathi on Queen's Road. Bombay shed a mother's tear over them and the other unknown volunteers but she swelled with pride to know it was her sons who were dying so that India might be free.

#### CONGRESS WAR CABINET

The triumphs of that struggle were made possible only because of the clarity of purpose, unity of control and generosity of support. United aggressive and effective action against the Bureaucracy was the single purpose for which all activity was co-ordinated. Unity of control and direction was secured through the emergence of the Congress War Cabinet or the Steel-Frame. It was a body of workers knit together by no other ties save of those of a common determination, a common policy and a common purpose. A scientific departmentalisation of the Congress war activities soon infused a happy team spirit into them and the joys of common achievement and the fears of common risk brought them closer every day



and built up a tradition of loyalty, comradeship and service hardly paralleled anywhere else. Another factor which contributed to Bombay's success was the enthusiasm with which the City's womanhood threw itself into the struggle. Immediately following the declaration of the war, organisation sprang up under the inspiration of spirited women and placed themselves entirely at the disposal of the Congress. They were drawn from all classes but all united for one purpose. In processions in demonstrations, in raids, in picketting—on every front they formed an integral part and each triumph was made possible only by their extraordinary sense of discipline, display of courage and deep-rooted feelings of patriotism. The organisation of Vanar Sena was another special feature of 1930 struggle. It made an instantaneous appeal to the imagination and succeeded in harnessing juvenile enthusiasm to national cause. The cheery youngsters shouting National Slogans were effective examples to older men. And the courages with which they invited and withstood Police charges during their rally was of a type that a battalion of veterans might envy.

#### PUBLICITY METHOD

While the courage and devotion of the Congress workers enabled Bombay to gain these victories, it was due to her publicity methods that all concentration was possible and effective massing of popular strength. With the application of the Criminal Law Amendment Act the nationalist Press ceased to be a useful medium and all Congress announcements had to depend upon the Bataki, the Bhoj patrika and the bulletins. The daily publication of the Congress bulletin was a daily assertion of the Congress strength. The bulletin was means to be a record of activities and a medium of announcements. But immediately on its appearance it became an issue in the fight and frantic attempts were made by the Government to throttle the Bulletin. But the bulletin continued to be published uninterruptedly and proved to be the most successful defiance of the Press Act and host of other penal laws designed to stifle the voice of freedom.

Another and a more sensational triumph was achieved when Congress announcements were put on the radio and broadcast.

The 1930 struggle ended in the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. It brought in a truce that was to establish peace. But the peace did not come. In its stead came the second struggle. The Civil Service, which was vanquished in 1930, was hatching vengeance.

#### THE SECOND ROUND

The whole of the year was spent by Government in planning for a new struggle. They had learnt many lessons in 1930 and made every diligent provision against a similar event. They forged new weapons and prepared even ambushes. But the main body of the Congress only hoped for peace. And when after the Round Table Conference the nation found itself trapped it was taken unawares. By clapping up Abdul Gaffar Khan and his Red Shirts in the Frontier and Pandit Jawharlal in the U. P., the Bureaucracy threw down a challenge which the Working Committee could have ignored only at the peril of its honour. The Working Committee stood true and picked up the gauntlet. Government by virtue of its secret preparations and its unashamed and unscrupulous methods succeeded in taking the Congress by surprise. Ordinances poured out of Simla like lava out of a living volcano and Congress organisations were submerged under them. The Congress struggled and Congressmen fought for two years and more. The issue was in the balance for the first six months. But later the terrorism of the Government and the treachery of non-Congressmen told. Congress forces had grown weary and the issues of the struggle—the no-tax campaign in U. P. and the Frontier Ordinances—had gone into the background. And later steadiness was lost in that direction with the result that the enemies of Indian freedom became more and more aggressive. The Reforms which were kept dangling in the background as a constructive alternative to repression began steadily to vanish. As the sun of Satyagraha went down the light disappeared from the face of the Reforms and to-day they are a dark and inert mass. After 12 months of struggle, the Bureaucracy succeeded in taking the initiative out of the hands of the Congress and the Civil Disobedience Campaign was reduced into sporadic attempts at defiance of authority by individual Congressmen.

#### DISOBEDIENCE SUSPENDED

The Campaign went on for another six months when taking advantage of Mahatmaji's freedom, a Conference was held of workers and leaders at Poona in



July, 1933 to review the progress of the struggle and to chalk out a new programme. As a result of that Conference the Congress suspended mass civil disobedience and restricted the campaign to select individuals. The Nation showed unmistakable sense of weariness and there was no proper response to the Poona decision. Meanwhile, a section of Congressmen had revived talks of Council-entry and their suggestions had gathered so much support that in April 1934, Gandhiji came forward with a generous pledge to support that policy and the Congress Parliamentary Board was formed. Immediately after, Gandhiji announced his decision to suspend even the campaign for individual Civil Disobedience and thus made it necessary for Government to lift the ban on Congress organisations. The Congress regained its right to live and function not as a result of its victory in the struggle but through the sufferance of its opponents. It was restored to freedom but not to that freedom to pursue its own ideals or its own methods. It can hereafter act only constitutionally or it must face another attempt of suppression. It is only natural that under the circumstances the A. I. C. C. which met at Patna decided that the session of the Indian National Congress should be held to review the position and to take new decisions. Bombay was anxious that she should be given the privilege of holding the session and the invitation was accepted.

#### GRACELESS ACTS OF GRACE

It is nothing surprising that wherever Government professes to act as a matter of grace they should often act gracelessly. The organisations which were suppressed at the inauguration of Civil Disobedience campaign have not been all restored to freedom and it is further a matter for deep regret that many of our valued co-workers and colleagues are to-day prevented from coming and participating in this gathering by the reason of the various restrictive orders under Emergency as well as Foreigner's Acts against them not having been withdrawn. That several active Congress workers should have their liberty of action so rigorously curtailed is a strong exposure of Government's plea that these restrictions were only means against subversive activities. Government's instructions are to utilise every reasonable opportunity to curb the freedom movement in India. And the continuance of the ban on Red Shirts and the Hindustani Seva Dal is a standing refutation of their profession that they would interfere with organisations only when they tended to violence or subversive activities. Both the organisations are integral parts of the Congress and if they are still not allowed to function it is because the Bureaucracy is convinced they are effective instruments in the cause of non-violent resistance. The non-removal of the ban is not only an indication of the Government's mind, but it is also an indirect recognition by the opponent of the excellent service these organisations had rendered during the last struggles.

#### PT. NEHRU'S INCARCERATION

The fact that Government have not yet released all civil disobedience prisoners although nearly 6 months have elapsed since the suspension of Satyagraha also gives an insight into the inner workings of the minds of the authorities. They would not let even Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to join us in this assembly to-day. They would not let him attend even on his ailing wife, without imposing irritating little-minded time limits. Heavy is the cross the intrepid Pandit had been called upon to bear but his is a valiant heart which no power on earth can crush. The sufferings which a resentful bureaucracy heaps upon him only serve to shed additional lustre on his radiant personality. May his wife be soon restored to health and he to freedom.

While on the question of Government's treatment of Satyagrahis let me refer to the result of repression in the various provinces and stretch the need for organised relief. In Karnatak, Gujrat and United Provinces the peasants and farmers have suffered immensely and the Congress will be failing in his duty if it does not give the necessary succor to those who in responding to its call have lost their all. The sufferings of Khudai Khidmatgars is unexampled and they too call for relief and help.

#### PETTIFOGGING AUTHORITIES

While great gods at Simla have been racking their brains to keep isolated all the Congress forces, the chota gods at Bombay have been doing their bit in heaping impediments in the way of holding the Congress session. Our application for the temporary use even on payment of rent of the vast and open unused tract of

reclaimed vacant land near Churchgate was turned down. That area was certainly more convenient being nearer the commercial centre and possessed better facilities for transport and other amenities, than this distant outskirts of the City. Though, so far as the actual results are concerned, this could not have and has not made any difference, because thousands of patriotic and enthusiastic Indians would always cheerfully undertake this annual political pilgrimage, even though the sessions be held either on the top of the freezing Himalayas or at the scorching lands-end of Cape Comorin. But this insolent rejection of our request by the Government, though insignificant and unimportant by itself, still demonstrates tragically our helplessness, impotence and dependence in our own country. That a large tract of vacant and unused piece of land, reclaimed at the cost of millions of rate-payers' money, cannot be made available for admittedly the greatest, the most representative and most popular political organisation in the country for a few days to hold its annual plenary session, is a position neither edifying nor adding to our national self-respect, particularly when we are made to feel the additional galling fact, that any favourable spot in any part of the country, should be at the disposal of officials and their aristocratic friends for their light sports and even harmful gambling games. I am sure this helpless condition will awaken the country to the sad reality of our situation.

As contrasted with the obstructive attitude of the Government, the Reception Committee acknowledges gratefully the co-operation and prompt assistance received from all officials of the Bombay Municipality, including the Improvement Trust, and the facilities for transport afforded by the Bombay Electric Supply and Tramways Co., helped considerably to reduce the hardship and inconvenience caused by this unreasonable rejection by the Government.

#### FIXING OF DATES

Criticism has been levelled in regard to the fixing of dates of the session. Some friends believe that this particular time of the year selected for such an important session is very unsuitable. The month of October is climatically the worst part of the year, making both long journeys and camp life rather uncomfortable. Sometime after the dates were fixed a request came from certain quarters for postponement of the session to a date after the Assembly elections, because they believed that this session would interfere with their election campaign. There is no doubt there is a good deal of force in both these arguments; but I would submit for your considerations the more weighty reasons that induced the Working Committee to fix those particular dates in spite of some inconvenience to certain friends; those of you who attended the Patna A. I. C. C. meeting will remember that in the resolution for formation of Parliamentary Board a constitutional objection was raised from a strong and considerable section of Congressmen that in view of the Lahore resolution boycotting the legislatures, the Council-entry programme could only be sanctioned by another plenary session of the Congress, hence it was necessary to arrange for an open session shortly before the Assembly elections so that the resolution about the Parliamentary Board might be endorsed by this session, and the Lahore ban against the council-entry could thus be formally and legally removed.

At a later date when further requests came for postponement after the dates of Assembly elections were actually fixed, additional weighty reasons prevailed to adhere to these original dates and these requests could not be granted. In view of the difference of opinion on the Working Committee's resolution on the Communal Award, it is but fair that an opportunity should be given to all parties including dissentients to place their point of view before the session and to obtain a final verdict. Pandit Malaviyaji and Sj. Aney had openly declared their intentions to continue their endeavours in this direction till the last, that is, till this plenary session, to get the Working Committee's resolution rescinded. Therefore, it was necessary and fair that an early opportunity should be given to them before this highest authority in the Congress constitution; otherwise the Cabinet might have been charged of attempting to evade that issue and not giving an opportunity of facing it in the open session. It is hoped and expected that Panditji, having openly sought and invited the verdict and justly claimed the right of audience from this open session, will, as a rigid disciplinarian and one of the oldest Congressmen abide by its mandate. These were some of the main considerations that prevailed in fixing these dates.

## DEMONSTRATIVE EFFECT

Besides, I believe that this huge mass, political gathering, is bound to create a great additional demonstrative and propagandist effect, not only in this city and Presidency, but all over the country and the fact that the council-entry proposals has obtained the sanction of this plenary session, will by itself, have a great propagandist value and is bound to have greater effect on all Congress-minded electorates in all parts of the country, than any individual or group electioneering campaign; thus far from hindering the election work this early session will certainly help the Congress candidates and I have no doubt that the country will readily and willingly respond to the Congress call and give its whole-hearted support to Congress candidates. I wish them all success.

In advancing these arguments I have taken for granted that this session will endorse the Patna resolution to the formation of the Parliamentary Board. So long as Mahatmaji's blessings to this new Parliamentary venture continues, there is no chance or risk of its being successfully challenged from any Congress quarter.

## CONGRESS AND COUNCIL-ENTRY

It might be contended that it would be inopportune at this stage on the eve of the elections, to reopen the question of council-entry. It would indeed be so if the principle of Council-entry was still an issue in dispute. But to-day it is an accepted plank in the Congress platform. And no one could think of tearing it out. And so it would only be in the fitness of things if the programme of the party is so amended as to make it a revolutionary force.

"Such suggestions and amendments as to details of the programme and policy and even in the manifesto would, I respectfully submit, be perfectly legitimate and within the province of every loyal Congressman because that would be in pursuance of and consistent with the Patna decision.

## THE CONGRESS SOCIALISTS

In one other aspect the Bombay session will also be considered as unique. This is the first session in which an organized political group within the Congress makes its appearance with a radically different outlook and fundamentally different programme. The Congress Socialist Party, born only a few months ago, has emerged with an ambitious programme. Again it is not for me to criticise or commend the policy and programme of this new party. No political prophet can venture to foretell its fate in the future but only this much can be said that whether this infant will grow into a powerful giant or would succumb untimely would entirely depend upon the capacity of their programme to attune itself to the National ideal and help in the speedier attainment of National Freedom.

## ATTITUDE TOWARDS STATES

The question of policy and attitude towards the Indian States will also engage the attention and await disposal by this assembly; whether the Congress should continue the present policy of aloofness or whether the demand of the States' subjects to be merged into and identified with the British Indians, should be conceded, will be another important issue and will have to be solved by the present session.

## CHANGES IN GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE

Coming to the immediate political issue which the Congress will be called upon to tackle, we must first take into consideration the changes in the Government's attitude between 1932 and 1934. As soon as it was realised that "unlawful" Congress had ceased to be aggressive, Whitehall at Simla grew more and more boastful. At the commencement of the struggle all they wanted was only that the Congress should drop "direct action" and that if it did so the reconstruction of Indian politics would be proceeded with on the basis of maximum agreement. The Congress knew that the assertion was incorrect. That was why it fought. When the fight was on, the Loyalist, the Liberal and the constitutional Nationalists and Independents all found fault with the Congress for carrying on a war in the face of such a clear declaration. To-day the war is not there. Is the work of political reconstruction going on on the basis of maximum agreement? Is not the Congress by common consent and by hostile testimony the greatest political institution carrying with it maximum popular support? Is not the new Constitution being hatched by ignoring and alienating this institution with the maximum popular support?

The English statesman knows his proclamations and professions are false but he has to make them for other reasons than he will care to confess. When our Liberals and Moderates know these proclamations and professions to be false, have they also to support them for other reasons than they will care to admit? Perhaps they have. They have been the willing and enthusiastic dupes of Government's dual policy of repression and reforms.

It is this policy of Repression and mock Reforms that will form the issue in the coming elections. To buttress repression with 'popular' support and to paralyse the freedom movement with the opiate of councils the bureaucracy depends upon time-servers, toadies and self-seekers. Should they secure them? God willing. No. The Congress is determined that the mockery of these reforms shall be exposed and that those weaklings and self-seekers who would sell their brothers' birth-right for a mess of political pottage could not be allowed to proceed to the market. Your vote in the coming election is a vote on this issue. A vote to a non-Congressman is a power of attorney to him to sell you and your children into perpetual serfdom to Britain. It is a jail warrant committing you to political purgatory.

#### COMMUNAL AWARD

The unity on the Congress election front has been unhappily disturbed by the needless controversy that had arisen over the Communal Award. The Working Committee has sternly set its face against every attempt to prejudice its decision refusing to discuss the Award, as it is pledged to National solution of the problem. The Working Committee would not be bullied into any situation which could be interpreted by interested communities as an admission of the justness of their mis-conceived demands. Viewed from the strictly national point of view there is nothing like a communal claim. Whenever there has been a dynamic programme, engaging the attention of the entire nation these false claims have never had a tearing. When the call came to join the colours in the fight for freedom no soldier joined the ranks on the basis of his caste, creed or community. Wherever there has been an opportunity for service willing workers have come forward from every community.

#### A HAPPY EXAMPLE

Our own Reception Committee furnishes a happy example. Without any reservations or safeguards, by a pure and simple process of free voting and unhampered election, the results achieved have proved more satisfactory than could have been achieved by any elaborate, complicated means of claims adjustments on a communal basis. The representation in our Reception Committee has by such natural process been adjusted almost in proportion to the numerical strength of each community. To those who charged the Congress with communalist tendencies, I offer my own instance, as a living, forceful and convincing refutation of that baseless charge. Though I am a member of the smallest community in the country, still purely by strength of non-communal votes, I have always topped the polls not only in Congress election but also in the election to the Corporation and the Council. The fact that I have been elected Chairman of the Reception Committee is a complete vindication of the Congress position. Again, although the offices in the Committee are distributed purely according to merits, without reference to major or minor communities there is a Mahommadan General Secretary in entire charge of the whole Nagar arrangements. The office of the G. O. C., a position of great responsibility and trust, is entrusted by unanimous choice to another nationalist member of the same community. In the same way, Vice-Chairmanships and other offices and memberships of various sub-committees are found to be distributed among various committees and even sects. Such recent examples are indeed encouraging and ought to inspire confidence in us all. That this problem is capable of a satisfactory solution by us provided we act in a proper national spirit and do not allow any outside agency to meddle with our domestic affairs.

#### NEED FOR UNITY

The differences of opinion over the communal Award have been unfortunately pushed to such a degree as to result in the formation of a distinct anti-award group. The step that Pandit Malaviya and Sj. Aney have taken has caused some jubilation in the ranks of our opponents, but their joy is bound to be short lived. Panditji's intentions are to bring the Award for the open verdict and the Nation can confi-



dental trust that he and his colleagues will abide by the Congress verdict, whatever it might be. However, no one can realise to-day more fully than Panditji the need for unity on the Congress ranks.

Whatever the differences, howsoever strong the personal sentiments or even conscientious objections, all should be subordinated to the final national tribunal. Here must end all dissensions and bickerings. Thenceforward stern discipline and loyal devotion should step in. Any opposition to the final verdict would certainly reserve the appellation of rebellion against the parent body.

Over-shadowing the political questions that will come up for discussion before you is the situation created by Mahatmaj's decision to retire from active Congress leadership. The announcement has come as a shock to the entire country. It is a matter of some consolation that he has postponed the final withdrawal till after the present session had met. I am sure, I am expressing the views and sentiments of all of you present here as well as the citizens of Bombay when I tender to him our grateful thanks for the consideration he has displayed to the feelings of his numerous friends, colleagues and followers. The statements that he has issued and the course of action that he has chalked out for himself demonstrates the magnanimity and the utter selflessness of this noble soul and his undoubted democratic convictions. Both with a view to avoid the sense of oppression which his towering personality imposes on colleagues and workers and also to find relief for himself for a similar feeling he has, after due deliberation, decided upon this course. His main object in taking this step would appear to be to encourage fearless thinking and independent judgment in Congress circles.

He realises that the intelligentsia has grown highly critical of his policy and programme but are feeling helpless to chalk out a definite line for themselves. As an excuse for this helplessness they were pleading the strength of his individual personality and the hold he had over the mass mind. His voluntary withdrawal is meant to remove all embarrassment to his followers. His critics will be given a fair field. The period of retirement will be to him a period of personal purification and a preparation for a mightier endeavour.

The Congress will no doubt miss the vigour of his inspiration and the masses will miss the light to which they had eagerly learnt to look all these 15 years. But behind all this fear lies the certain hope that all such withdrawal could only be temporary. With an ideal pitched to Freedom, with a life dedicated to service, Gandhiji cannot in any accepted sense of the word retire. Inside or outside the Congress he will be the living challenge to all oppression and tyranny and the guiding star to every votary of freedom.

Closely entwined with the question of leadership lies the question of future programme. To every soldier of freedom the programme can only be a struggle or a preparation for a struggle. The preparation for the next struggle is our next programme. The attainment of Complete National Independence is our unalterable objective. The adoption of peaceful means of resistance is our unalterable means. And as our objective is clear and our faith unshaken I am confident that suitable fresh tactics would soon be evolved leading to a new endeavour. This is the hour not of resting but of planning—planning not for a tactical triumph but for an enduring achievement. In the planning every devoted son of the Motherland has a part. The Congressmen, the Congress Parliamentarian, the Congress Nationalist and the Congress Socialist have all to sit together and to devise the new means of furthering freedom's cause. Each plan and each activity must be judged by only one test, its capacity to develop the nation's strength to assert her dignity to claim her rights and to regain her freedom.

#### A HARD TASK

Now a word about ourselves. The arrangements for the holding of the Congress session constitute no easy task, Bombay had to take the work up at a very short notice. An unusually heavy monsoon which lasted later than the usual period prevented the work of construction being taken on hand earlier. A petty-minded Government compelled the Reception Committee to resort to chose an out of the way place for constructing the pandal and other camps. The monsoon has been succeeded by a season of sweltering heat which place an additional handicap on the workers who had to race against time. The economic depression which the city has been feeling in a more and more acute form made it difficult for the merchants and the professional classes to contribute generously to the coffers of the Reception Committee. The country is generally suffering from a feeling of exhaus-



tion following a period of protracted political struggle and it had its share in adding to the difficulties of the Reception Committee but quiet and steady work surmounted all these obstacles and the desire of all workers to make this undertaking a grand and unique success so as to redound to the credit of both Congress and the City has been fulfilled. At various stages since the formation of our Committee difference of opinion and disagreements on smaller and bigger issues came to be evident and it was only the devotion of the workers to the Congress cause and their high sense of duty which enabled the work to be carried on uninterruptedly. A splendid spirit of accommodation and stern sense of discipline had rendered co-operation easy and fruitful.

The construction of the Abdul Gaffar Nagar reminds one of the fairy tales in which cities sprang almost over-night thrown up by the genii. Such a magical transformation in real life has only been made possible by the powerful hold which the Congress exercises over the public mind. Merchants, Engineers, artisans, workmen, all vied with each other in co-operating for the success of the arrangement. It would be invidious for me to mention names where everyone has worked with such whole-hearted devotion. To each worker from the humble volunteer errand boy to the construction board and the Secretaries responsible for the work of the various departments I would publicly tender thanks on behalf of the Reception Committee and you all.

While I can claim on behalf of the Reception Committee that we have made every effort to secure the utmost convenience of visitors and delegates, I am conscious that there still might be several drawbacks in the arrangements that we have made. I have already referred to the difficulties against which we have to contend. I must confess that in spite of our desire and our earnest endeavours, we have not come up to the high standard that you will always expect of a City like Bombay. For such manifest failings and shortcomings the Reception Committee expect to be excused. Nothing remains for me to add but to express the wish that your stay in this Nagar may be happy and pleasant.

May the just and benevolent Providence guide us in our onward march. May He vouchsafe to us the vision to see correctly and the strength to persevere steadily. In His ordering of progress He tempers every movement both in the heat of victory and the cold of defeat. And where the metal is true He stamps it with enduring achievement. Friends, I have done.

### Rajendra Babu's Presidential Speech

*Babu Rajendra Prasad*, President of the 48th session of the Indian National Congress delivered the following address :—

Brothers and Sisters,

We are meeting after three years and a half of strenuous work and suffering. The country has had the misfortune of losing the guidance and mature judgment of a veteran worker like Dr. Annie Besant, whose life and work have been a source of inspiration to thousands. It has further had the misfortune of losing another veteran patriot in Sir Sankaran Nair and a valiant nationalist in Mr. Syed Hasan Imam, who 16 years ago, guided the deliberations of a special session of the Congress in the very city. The passing away of that uncompromising champion of our liberties, whether in or out of the Speaker's chair, Vithalbhai Patel leaves a gap, which will be well-nigh impossible to fill. To many of us, the premature death of Deshapriya Jatindra Mohan Sen-Gupta was a personal calamity. In Mr. A. Rangaswamy Iyengar the country has lost not only a distinguished journalist but also a constitutional lawyer, whose knowledge was frequently requisitioned.

Let me also remind you of the one, who is behind prison bars and who represents more than any one else the flower of the youth of our country and whose ardent spirit is undaunted by national set-backs or domestic anxieties. To Jawaharlal Nehru, our heartiest greetings and sympathy. Our thought also must go to the sturdy fighter, Subhas Chandra Bose, now in a foreign land. Nor may we forget all those who, though unknown, have suffered or are still suffering for the sake of the country.

To those servants of the nation, known and unknown, who have passed away we offer our homage.

You have called me to preside over the Congress at a very difficult and critical time. It will be natural on your part to expect me to carry on the national work

till the next session of the Congress. I confess, I feel overwhelmed by the tremendous responsibility that the position carries with it. I would have been happy to be left alone to work in my own humble way in my corner of the country, but the nation's call may not be disobeyed and I am here at your service. I am fully conscious of my limitations, and I have sense enough to know that this signal mark of confidence is not meant as a personal tribute, but is only a token of appreciation of the little contribution that my poor province has been able to make during the recent struggle and of the sympathy which it has been its good fortune to receive in such ample measure in its recent unprecedented calamity. It rests, however, with you to help me by your unstinted support and co-operation to carry on the difficult duties you have entrusted to me.

#### SUFFERINGS OF BIHAR

Coming as I do from a province which, during the last ten months or so, has been particularly selected as the victim of Nature's wrath, I desire to convey my heartfelt thanks to the country, which has shown practical sympathy with the people stricken by phenomenal earthquake followed by huge floods. The response, which has come from all quarters and from all classes of people, inhabiting this vast country and from Indians abroad, and from foreigners shows conclusively that if the disaster was unprecedented in its magnitude, the sympathy and fellow-feeling it evoked was equally unparalleled. There have been disasters in the past, which though not so vast in extent, were still some of the greatest recorded in history, and yet the country was never before roused to such a pitch of active sympathy. As the national feeling has grown and pervaded the country at large, the wail of people in a corner of Northern India has resounded and re-echoed from one end to the other and drawn out not only cash but tears and personal service. As the Bihar Central Relief Committee said in one of its early statements: "Out of the great tragedy that has overwhelmed Bihar and taken its heavy toll of death and destruction and sorrow, some enduring good has come in the shape of a united nation joined together in a common sorrow and common effort to overcome it, having faith in each other and forgetting the petty differences that seemed so trivial in the face of a mighty disaster."

#### RECENT HISTORY

The Congress movement has passed through various phases during the last fifty years of its existence. One would feel tempted to take a birds-eye-view of its hope and aspirations, its weaknesses and failures, its successes and triumphs. But I would resist that temptation except in so far as recent history may be necessary to elucidate the present and enable us to lay out a programme for the future.

It will be recalled that the last regular session of the Congress was held at Karachi in March 1931, soon after the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. It was much to be hoped that that Pact would open a way to permanent peace between Britain and India but that was not to be. Now that Civil Disobedience has been suspended it would be useless to go into a detailed examination of the circumstances, which forced the hands of the Congress to re-start Civil Disobedience after Mahatma-Gandhi's return from the Second Round Table Conference. I would content myself by stating that at every step the object of the authors of the Pact was frustrated by the officials who were in charge of affairs and had to give effect to its provisions. Lord Irwin had retired. Lord Willingdon had come in and there was undisguised resentment in official circles at what was regarded as a surrender on the part of Lord Irwin, and the moment he was away from the scene, a complete change in the Government policy came about and preparations were set afoot to take the Congress by surprise as soon as the Round Table Conference was over. It was known the Government could not afford, and did not attend to accept the demands of the Congress. Events in England also proved favourable to this scheme of things. The Labour Government had resigned. The National Government with a big Conservative majority was formed and the whole policy of Lord Irwin and Mr. Wedgwood Benn was reversed. When Mahatma Gandhi returned from England he found himself faced with a situation which seemed to have been very carefully and meticulously prepared. An excuse was found in what was wrongly described and advertised as a No-Rent Campaign in the United Provinces, but which was really nothing more than suspension of payment pending negotiations, which had been going on between the Government on the one side and the Congress leaders on the

other, to secure a settlement on an equitable basis on the very serious question of remission or suspension of rent on purely economic grounds, which had become necessary on account of unprecedented economic depression. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. Sherwani and Mr. Tandon were arrested just two days before Mahatma Gandhi's arrival and Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan with some of his colleagues was made a prisoner under an old Regulation. Bengal had already been selected for special treatment and a number of most drastic Ordinances had been promulgated. They were followed by equally drastic Ordinances for the United Provinces and the Frontier. On his voyage, Mahatma Gandhi had been issuing statements offering co-operation but on landing he came to know of the removal, by arrest and imprisonment, of valued colleagues and the promulgation of the Ordinances in the United Provinces and the Frontier; yet he offered, on behalf of the Working Committee, to intervene and if possible, to bring about a settlement and applied to the Viceroy for an interview, which was unceremoniously rejected except under condition that the questions relating to Bengal, the U. P. and the Frontier would not be subjects of discussion. The interview having been rejected, Mahatma Gandhi had no option but to advise the Working Committee to be prepared for the revival of Civil Disobedience. But he made a last moment attempt and sent a second long telegram begging again for an unconditional interview failing which he thought it his duty to inform the Viceroy that the Working Committee would have to resort to Civil Disobedience. Reply came to this last moment request in the form of warrants of arrest for himself, the Congress President, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and other prominent Congressmen throughout the country.

The Congress was taken unawares and the Government expected that they would be able to crush the whole movement within a fortnight. In spite of want of preparation, in spite of sudden removal of all the prominent Congress workers throughout the country within a few days to prison, when they were not able to give instructions to their followers as to how to organise the campaign, it must be said to the credit of the nation that the lead, which had been given by the Working Committee, was faithfully and spontaneously followed. Thousands again courted imprisonment, 'lathi' charges, firings, heavy fines, confiscation of property, and beatings on extensive scale.

#### THE COURSE OF REPRESSION

The movement was not crushed and went on for months and months without a break to the bewilderment of officials, who had hoped to crush it in a few days. Special sessions of the Congress were held at Delhi and at Calcutta amidst arrests and 'lathi' charges and in spite of the vigilance of the police, who had concentrated upon preventing them.

It is unnecessary to go into details of this repression beyond stating that a bare summary of the provisions of the various ordinances most of which were later converted into acts by obliging Legislatures will show how drastic they were in character and comprehensive in scope. The courts were ousted from jurisdiction and the Executive armed with large powers. The press was muzzled. New offences were created and in some cases collective and vicarious punishments laid down. To these must be added numerous laws enacted for Bengal, particularly apparently to meet what is described as the terrorist menace, but resulting not in a few cases in a complete suspension of all political activities of a progressive type lest their sponsors should incur the wrath and the penalty of the all powerful C. I. D.

Now, the Congress has never concealed its view regarding the terrorist movement. It has condemned without hesitation and in an unequivocal language all terrorist outrages and under the great influence of Mahatma Gandhi has done all it could to create an atmosphere against the cult of terrorism. But at every step, it has felt hampered by the fact that impatient enthusiasts, who take to this wrong method, cannot effectively be approached by public opinion on account of the stiffness of the Government attitude and its all pervading blasting suspicion of the motives of even those, who are its supporters and helpers in this respect.

Apart from other considerations, the Congress condemns terrorism because it hampers the country's progress and tends to create forces which will lead to further disruption and trouble and because it is essentially wrong and un-Indian. But these young men cannot be weaned from it by the equally indefensible method of unadulterated repression.

## ECONOMIC DEPRESSION

The country has been passing through a period of deep economic depression, which has been intensified by the Government policy of managing Indian affairs in the interests not of India but of Great Britain. The past few years have seen great distress of the peasantry unable to pay the heavy land revenue and rent and suffering great privations. They have witnessed curtailment of expenditure of nation-building departments, great slump in industry, export of more than 200 crores of distress gold, dislocation of trade and a tremendous increase in unemployment the extent of which even in the best of normal years the British Government have never dared to ascertain owing to its vastness. These years have been remarkable for heavy additions to the so-called public Debt of India and the burdens of the already overtaxed taxpayer and the poverty-stricken population for carrying on an extravagant and top-heavy administration and partly for suppressing and crushing the movement for freedom.

## THE OTTAWA PACT

The Ottawa Pact, which has been condemned with one voice by the best-informed opinion in the country as being detrimental to the best interests of India, and particularly of the masses of agriculturists, was ratified. Its working has proved that the apprehensions of its critics were well-founded. It has successfully tied India to the chariot wheels of the British policy of Imperial preference.

## INDIANS ABROAD

The position of our countrymen abroad gives no ground for satisfaction. Their treatment in the colonies of the British Empire has been a long-standing cause of just grievance and has influenced not a little the change in our outlook and opinion in favour of complete independence. One after another, Indians settled in these colonies and protectorates are being deprived of their inherent rights to which they are entitled by virtue of their long association, service and contribution to the prosperity of these colonies. They have, in fact, been instrumental in many cases in building up these colonies and many have been born in them and have their homes without any other in the world. One scheme after another is devised to get rid of them after they are no more needed, and although it is some consolation to know that the scheme of assisted repatriation has been given up, it is also to be noted that no place is found in the vast British Empire where they can live and settle with the same full rights to land and citizenship as others have in India. The latest application of this policy of squeezing out Indians is reported from Zanzibar where in spite of the best of relations which Indians have maintained for generations with the Sultan and his subjects, ordinances have been hurriedly passed which deprive them of the rights of acquiring land. The discrimination against Indians becomes flagrant when we know that this restriction does not extend to the new arrivals from Arabia.

There is nothing surprising in all this when we know that Indians do not enjoy even elementary rights of citizenship in their own country and which even the proposed constitutional reforms are not going to confer on them.

We can only give this assurance to our countrymen abroad that as our position at home improves their position will also automatically improve. In this connection it is impossible not to mention with gratitude the great name of Dinabandhu O. F. Andrews, who has been frequently going to Africa to render such help as has been possible for him to render.

## THE DUAL POLICY

The Government policy, which was enunciated by Lord Irwin towards the end of 1929 announcing the convening of the Round Table Conference, has always had a double aspect which has been emphasised more than once by Lord Willingdon's Government. It has been claimed by the Government that this double policy, on the one hand, aims at advancing constitutional reforms, and on the other, seeks to suppress what the Government considers to be subversive and revolutionary movements. In pursuance of the first, it is claimed that the Round Table Conference has been convened and proposals have been framed as a result of consultation with Indians and that a Joint Parliamentary Committee is considering them. These proposals are known as the White Paper. In pursuance of the second, the Government has thought it necessary to suppress the Civil Disobedience movement with a heavy hand.



To Indians it seems that the second policy has not only been much more in evidence and has caused untold suffering to numberless people, but is responsible for the issuing of ordinances and the enactment of laws which have taken away even the ordinary rights of citizenship and laid down drastic penalties and suppressed not only what may be regarded as subversive movements, but effectively prevented perfectly constitutional agitation also.

The reform side of the policy has succeeded only in feeding credulous people on hopes of something which may not come. We have, unlamentedly, had three Round Table Conferences, Committees and Sub-Committees *ad infinitum* and prolonged enquiry by a Joint Parliamentary Committee. It has dragged in some form or other its interminable investigations for six or seven long years. It is yet to be seen if this long labour is going to produce anything acceptable even to the most moderate opinion in the country.

### THE WHITE PAPER

The White Paper has been condemned by almost unanimous public opinion in India as highly disappointing and unsatisfactory. And, of course, it does not in any way fulfil the requirements of the Congress, which has declared for independence meaning and including complete control over the Army, the Finances, the foreign relations and the internal administration of the country. The White Paper is nothing if it is not a negation of all these items and if it does not bar even a gradual progress towards any of them. In view of the fact that very serious efforts are being made in England to whittle down even the White Paper proposals and that even Mr. Arthur Henderson, the Leader of the Labour Party, is unable to concede anything in the nature of even diluted self-determination to India, it may seem out of place for me to devote any time to its detailed criticism.

But inasmuch as the White Paper proposals are the result of long and expensive consultations and are undergoing detailed examination by the Joint Parliamentary Committee and have been put forward in justification of the Government policy of advancing constitutional reforms, I take leave to point out that the proposals of the White Paper do not take us anywhere near what our moderate country aim at viz., Dominion Status, not to speak of complete independence which is the Congress goal. In fact, they take the country in some respects in the opposite direction and leave it in a position constitutionally worse than that now occupied under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms.

I will judge the White Paper proposals in the light of four tests, namely, (1) How far the proposed new legislatures will be representative of the nation; (2) How far the powers alleged to be transferred to popular control are real in the Centre and the Provinces; (3) What the Powers proposed to be transferred in regard to the Finances are, and what additional burdens India will have to bear for the new constitution, and (4) whether the proposed constitution contains within itself any elements of growth and development.

### I. COMPOSITION OF THE FEDERAL LEGISLATURE

It is sought to replace the block of officials and non-officials nominated by the Government by nominees of Indian States joining the Federation. The nominated officials and non-officials of British India cannot be said to be amenable to popular opinion but they have certainly a wider outlook and are more in contact with public opinion than any nominee of a State could be. They also feel a sense of responsibility even though it is to the British Government and not to the people of India. Will the State nominees have any information about or acquaintance with events happening in British India from which the States have been in a way kept segregated?

The only effect of the replacement of the nominated block by States nominees will be a tightening of the British control coupled with traditions of a more autocratic rule and greater disregard of popular wishes than we are accustomed to in British India and which these nominees will bring with themselves.

But apart from its bearing the character of a nominated block it will also be a large block numerically. Under the Montague Reforms out of 145 members of the Assembly 40 or 27.5 per cent are nominated if we exclude the Member for Berar who for practical purposes is an elected member; under the White Paper proposals out of a house of 375 no less than 125 or 33.3 per cent are nominated by the States—an increase in the nominated element of 6 per cent. When we look at the



composition of the elected element in the Federal Assembly we find that separate electorates have not only been retained but considerably extended and the number of those generally expected to side with the British and the Governor-General considerably increased. I believe, in the place of 41 out of 104 or 39 per cent being returned by separate electorates under the existing constitution, we shall have 108 out of 250 or 43 per cent returned by separate electorate under the White Paper scheme. Thus, there can be hardly any doubt that the White Paper Federal Assembly will be a less progressive and more autocratically inclined body than the present Assembly. It is unnecessary to go into the constitution of the Second Chamber which is bound to be less progressive than the popular house. In a joint session which is provided for, the nominated element will be as much as 235 out of 636 or 37 per cent, and a motion of no confidence in connection with a subject relating to British India against a British Indian minister can never secure a two-thirds majority if the State nominees chose to maintain the ministry.

In the provinces the nominated block is done away with, but several provinces like Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and the United Provinces are going to be saddled in its place with a Second Chamber and if the trend of opinion as it is developing in England gives any indication, other provinces are probably going to follow suit under the advice of the Joint Parliamentary Committee.

Whatever justification there may be for a Second Chamber in the Federal Legislature, there is none whatever for it in a subordinate legislature like that of the provinces. Besides, there is no justification for the extra expenditure involved in setting up and maintaining these Second Chambers. Nor does the experience of the working of the Montford Reforms lend any support in their favour even in the provinces, which may be said to be radical or very progressive.

## II. POWERS CLAIMED TO BE TRANSFERRED

Now, no constitution can be said to confer Self-Government or responsible Government or Dominion Status, much less complete independence, which reserves to the Governor-General and refuses to transfer to ministers under the control of a popular legislature, the administration of Defence, Foreign Affairs and Ecclesiastical Departments. But leaving this alone, which the White Paper frankly reserves, let us consider the Departments it professes to transfer. In regard to these also, it is clearly laid down that the Governor-General will not be guided by the advice of Ministers, if so to be guided would infringe on what are called the Reserve Departments, his special responsibilities and I may add also his discretionary powers. These are couched in such general terms that there are hardly any measures which the Governor-General could not hold up or prevent if he considered it necessary to do so, in his wisdom, which will be the final arbiter in the matter. These special responsibilities are so vague and widespread that they may be said to pervade all departments.

It is not inconceivable that the most innocent action taken by a minister not in favour with the Governor-General or the Governor and in this respect the powers of both are identical for all practical purposes within their respective spheres, could easily be regarded as infringing upon his social responsibility in respect of one or other of the seven heads into which it is divided. The much advertised autonomy of the Provinces really gives more autonomy to the Governor than to the people or to the minister and enables the Governor-General to have his orders executed in spite of the ministers even when they may happen to deal with a matter falling within the scope of the latter if only the Governor or Governor-General decides that it infringes on the special responsibility of the one or the other.

### SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Special responsibilities are laid down under seven heads for the Governor-General. They are (I) the prevention of grave menace to the peace or tranquility of India or any part thereof; (II) the safe-guarding of the financial responsibility and credit of the Federation; (III) the safeguarding of the legitimate interests of minorities; (IV) the securing to the members of the Public Services of any right provided for them by the Constitution Act and the safeguarding of their legitimate rights; (V) the prevention of commercial discrimination; (VI) the protection of the rights of Indian States; and (VII) any matter which affects the administration of any department under the direction and control of the Governor-General, the Governor-General being empowered in each case to determine whether

any special responsibility is involved in any given circumstance. The same powers are given 'mutatis mutandis' to the Governor in so far as they are applicable to provinces. The first practically takes away with one hand what it purports to give with the other; law and order though said to be transferred in the provinces are thus kept quite safe within the double lock of special responsibility of the Governor-General and the Governor. The elasticity of this phrase is quite well-known in this country and I am using no language of exaggeration if I say that it is mere camouflage and a fraud to say that law and order are being transferred when the special responsibility in this respect is reserved in the wide and all pervasive terms as is done under the White Paper proposal. As regards the second, admittedly definition of this responsibility is drawn in wide terms and enables the Governor-General to step in whenever any proposal of the minister regarding budgetting or borrowing is considered by him as prejudicing or endangering India's credit in the money market of the world. Past experience has shown that financial stability and credit of India are synonymous with British profit at the expense of India, and British interests have been served so often and so brazen-facedly in the name of India's stability and credit that no Indian is likely to be deceived by words which connote more than their ordinary dictionary meaning. The entire currency and exchange policy of the Government is said to be dictated by these considerations and we know it to our cost how a stroke of the pen or an apparently innocent notification of the Government has the effect of transferring crores from the hands of Indians to those of the British without the former realising it. The third will, of course, come every handy in turning many an awkward corner.

Our Muslim brethren and others who are in a minority are apt to run away with the idea that the British Government is reserving special responsibility to safeguard their interest. Really speaking, if there is anything more calculated than another to keep all the communities warring with each other, it is this. Besides, it is a delusion to think that the safeguards are devised to serve any of the Indian minorities. They will find its actual working that after all, in all matters of moment, it is not they who are meant, but the small microscopic minority of those birds of passage, who come from thousands of miles and make hay while the sun shines and then disappear in the evening of their days to enjoy the fruits in their native land again.

The fourth destroys whatever is yet left of autonomy. We shall, indeed, be masters in our own house without having the power to order our servants about to whom we shall be bound to pay their unbearably high salaries, guarantee their pensions and leaves and promotion and what not. It will be easy enough for these so-called civil servants to set at naught not only the policy, decisions and orders of their so-called superiors, the ministers but to create deadlocks, which will be set down to the discredit of Indians who will be branded as incompetent and inexperienced ministers to whom it was a mistake, it will be said, to transfer powers.

#### COMMERCIAL DISCRIMINATION

In the name of preventing commercial discrimination against the British, it is really ensured that the Indian should be discriminated against in the future as he has been in the past. It must be the experience of all businessmen who have anything to do with the Government and they cannot move an inch without coming across the Government in some form or another how at every step they have to face situations which a Britisher here has not to face. Go to the coal-fields. They will tell you how it is difficult for an Indian colliery owner to get a railway siding to his colliery, how it is difficult for him to get wagons and how the Indian is every day discriminated against in practice. I am not mentioning how it has been possible for a few British concerns to get leases of practically the whole area with the best seams of coal and how Indians have to be content with second and third class collieries and even these they get with difficulty. I am not forgetting that colliery lands are largely owned by Indians. We know how these things are managed, specially when the owner happens to be the award of court. The manipulation of railway freight offers an easy handle. When I was looking after the affairs of the All-India Spinners' Association in my province I calculated some years ago that the cost of transport of cotton from Sewan (in the district of Saran where cotton is largely grown) to Madhubani in the district of Darbhanga where we produce our best and largest quantity of Khadi, both the districts being within the same division

of Tirhut under a Commissioner, was the same as that of transporting cotton from Bombay to Japan and bring back the cloth made of that cotton to Bombay. I do not know if there has been a change in this respect recently. Similarly, I was told that the cost of transporting coal from South Africa to Indian cotton-mills was the same as that of transporting it from the coal-fields of Bihar to the same mills. I am mentioning these few illustrations and they can be multiplied to show how in the past the whole policy of the Government of India has been regulated with an eye not to the benefit of Indians but of foreigners, and if by any chance any minister has the temerity to try to be just he will at once be held up as discriminating against the Britisher and the Governor-General or the Governor will have no difficulty in invoking his special responsibility for perpetuating the injustice.

As regards the Indian States, we have already had illustrations how activities of their subjects in favour of constitutional reforms can be throttled and the special responsibility of the Governor-General or the Governor in this respect will be used for preventing the virus of democracy from spreading into these States.

So much for special responsibilities. The discretionary powers of the Governor-General and the Governors are of a most drastic kind.

Under the existing constitution, the Governor has the power of certification and veto, but under the proposal embodied in the White Paper, he can also send message to the legislature not to proceed with a certain measure of legislation as also to proceed in a certain way; not to pass certain laws as also to pass certain others or that a particular measure must be passed by a particular date and in the event of the legislature refusing or failing to obey his command, it will become a Governor-General's or Governor's Act which will have the force of an Act of legislature without having the odium attached to the name of "ordinance" and without the fetters of a limited duration, which an ordinance has. These proposals place India under a virtual dictatorship.

Mr. Churchill described the position admirably in another context:

"The Viceroy or Governor-General was armed with all the powers of a Hitler or a Mussolini. By a stroke of pen he could scatter the constitution and decree any law to be passed or martial law, which was no law at all. Of all these he was the sole judge. Such a functionary was a dictator and he had a very powerful army."

All this power is given not only to the Governor-General but even to Provincial Governors, who are, for the first time, to be invested with powers to pass ordinances and Governor's Acts and all other powers within their spheres which the Governor-General possesses in respect of the country as a whole.

The White Paper proposals further take away certain powers which are now possessed by the Assembly in however attenuated a form they may be. Thus, a discussion of the Railway budget used to furnish an opportunity for the ventilation of grievance in connection with railway administration. Railways could now be discussed and voted upon by the Central legislature but the creation of the proposed statutory railway authority would have the effect of precluding the future Government and legislature from making any effective criticism of any matter transferred to the authority. That this is not a negligible matter is apparent from the fact that the Railways have some 800 crores invested in them and are very largely national concerns already. In where they are not so they are soon passing into the hands of the State.

### III. FINANCE

(3) When we come to consider the question of finance, the illusory nature of the so-called reform becomes still more apparent. It has been calculated that 80 per cent. of the Central revenue in the Central Government will be eaten up by army expenditure. Debt service, guaranteed pays, pension and allowances, which will be outside the vote of the Assembly, and the remaining 20 per cent with which alone the Minister, supposed to be responsible to the legislature could play would be subject to a vote of the upper chamber which could bring it, before a joint session of both Chambers for final determination. Further, if the Governor-General regards the demand for grants by the Minister under any head inadequate for the discharge of his special responsibility, he may include any additional amount which he regards necessary for the discharge of such special responsibility and the legislature will not be at liberty to vote on the same. Thus it is apparent that the control of the ministry over the public purse is practically nil in the Centre.

Considering the proposals from the point of view of the burden imposed on the country it has been said on high authority that the introduction of provincial autonomy will involve an annual expenditure of 6½ to 8 crores and that of responsibility in the centre another 2 crores every year.

In a country which is admittedly the poorest in the world where the cost of administration is top-heavy and certainly out of all proportion to the income per capita of the population under it, any addition to the already unbearable burden cannot but be regarded with the greatest misgiving, and no responsible person can easily reconcile himself to this additional burden as a price for reforms so illusory, so retrograde and so calculated to perpetuate and tighten the stranglehold on the country.

#### IV. FUTURE IN THE AIR

There is no provision for any automatic growth or development in the constitution. Everything does and will continue to depend on the sweet will and pleasure of the British Parliament. There is no pretence at self-determination and even the Federation which is to come after fulfilment of so many conditions precedent can come only after a second vote of the Houses of Parliament.

And what is this federation? It is a kind of federation which has no parallel in history. In it the rulers of one-third of India will be called in to counteract through their nominees the progressive elected elements of the remaining two-thirds. There is absolutely no mutuality in any respect, the princes' nominees will have equal rights with the elected representatives of British India to interfere with the administration of British India without British Indian representatives having any the least voice in the administration of the States, which will continue their autocratic rule without so much as even declaring, or guaranteeing the elementary, fundamental rights of citizenship, which are or rather ought to be, the basis and foundation of any allegiance which the people may be required to bear to the State.

In other words, it will be a kind of federation in which unabashed autocracy will sit entrenched in one-third of India and peep in every now and then to strangle popular will in the remaining two-thirds.

But the princes themselves will be more helpless than they are now and will realise the effect of a federation which is conceived to keep them free from the baneful interference of British India people but nonetheless subservient to the Viceroy.

#### SUSPENSION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE—COUNCIL PROGRAMME

I have thus far discussed the dual policy of Government. I come now to our own policies and plans. Events have somehow so happened that since the breach of the Truce in 1932 we have had to steer our course clear of Government policies. The suspension of the Civil Disobedience movement was declared not with reference to any declaration of policy by Government, but with reference to the peculiar moral and spiritual character of our struggle.

I will not go into the events that led up to the historic Patna decision of May 1934—how Gandhiji successfully challenged from jail the Communal Award of the Premier which had threatened to vivisection the Hindu community in twain, how Gandhiji intensified the movement for the abolition of untouchability and his epic fast as part of it, and his release, the Poona Conference and how as a result of things he had heard and seen during the great Harijan tour he came to recommend to the A. I. C. C. suspension of the Civil Disobedience and confining it to himself. Let the country study the course of events in the statements Gandhiji has issued from time to time.

#### WEAKNESS OF THE MOVEMENT

Some of the factors which must have weighed with Gandhiji when he recommended suspension of Civil Disobedience as a mass movement could not have escaped the notice of even casual observers. Two weaknesses seem to me to have dogged our footsteps.

Firstly, the Congress workers had been gradually and perhaps unconsciously led into adoption of methods of secrecy, which reduced what would have been an open battle of defiance into a battle of wits: It was not realised that Satyagraha is essentially a fight on a higher moral plane in which suffering is openly courted



and cheerfully borne and which aims at conquering the opponent by an appeal to his moral sense and in which any attempt to over-reach him rebounds with fatal effect on the Satyagrahi himself.

Secondly, it must be also admitted that the attack of the Government on a vulnerable point succeeded. People were not prepared to lose property to the extent they were prepared to lose liberty and even life and when heavy fines and sequestration of property in lieu of fines and confiscations started on a wholesale scale, gradually demoralisation set in and ultimately broke the back-bone of the movement. Attempt was made to continue the struggle by confining it to those individuals who had faith in it and taking it out of the methods of secrecy. That partly explains the Poona and the Patna decisions.

#### COUNCIL ENTRY PROGRAMME

It has had to be suspended in the very interests of the movement and those of the country. The principal reason was our own weakness and yet I do not feel that there is any reason to be down-hearted.

Our object is nothing less than the liberation of our country which is as big as a continent, with its varied population of many castes and creeds and speaking different languages. The response, which the country has made from one end to the other to the call of the Congress, has been splendid and we have reason to be proud of it.

Because our object is great and the task difficult and tremendous we have to consider our own shortcomings and defects of the Working Committee and certain announcements which Mahatma Gandhi has made have been subjected to very searching criticism. The value and importance of these resolutions and the statements of Mahatmaji consist in the fact that they have brought in the forefront of discussion certain fundamental considerations. The first statement, which Mahatmaji issued from Patna on the 7th April last, simultaneously with his correspondence with Dr. Ansari, announced his advice to the Congress and Congressmen to suspend Civil Disobedience except with regard to himself and to those who believed in entry into legislatures, to take up the programme of Council Entry. Both these items were considered at great length at a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at Patna in the following May and were endorsed by it. The Council Entry programme naturally led to the creation of the Congress Parliamentary Board which has been entrusted with the work of organising, guiding and controlling propaganda in favour of election of Congressmen to the Assembly for the time being.

#### THE COMMUNAL AWARD

Now, to-day we are in the midst of a campaign which has led to the formulation of the Congress policy in the legislatures in regard to the White Paper and the Government policy of ruthless repression on which all parties in it are agreed but also, unfortunately, on what has been called the Communal decision of the British Government on which all are not agreed. It will be recalled that after the Second Round Table Conference, the British Government announced its decision settling from its point of view the questions of communal representation in the legislatures under the reform constitution. The decision was given because the Indian members of the Round Table Conference were unable to arrive at an agreed settlement of the outstanding differences on the constitutional question amongst the various communities in India. It has created the unfortunate position that whilst we are unable to agree among ourselves, it is also impossible to accept this decision which is anti-national in many respects and is calculated to retard the progress of the country towards a common national outlook. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that some of the minorities, particularly the Mussalmans, are opposed to rejecting it or think in the main it safeguards their interests.

The Working Committee had, therefore, to decide the question on which a large section of Hindus and Sikhs are on the one side and practically all Mussalmans, with a few leading exceptions, and perhaps members of some other minority communities are on the other, the former favouring the unqualified rejection of the decision and the latter equally strongly favouring its acceptance, until it was replaced by an agreed settlement. Under the circumstances, the Working Committee had no other alternative but to point out the unsatisfactory and anti-national nature of the decision hoping at the same time to replace it by an agreed settlement, and to that end not to divert the attention of the country by creating an agitation in favour of either accepting or rejecting it.



### MAHATMAJI'S STATEMENT

But events have marched quickly during the past few weeks. Mahatma Gandhi has just made two statements of far-reaching importance, in which he has recorded his reading of the history of the past fifteen years, placed his finger unerringly on the several places of our heart and given us a warning for the future. Not even his worst critics have challenged his analysis and some have even gloated over the situation in an 'I told you so' spirit. It will be best for us and for our country if even at the end of these fifteen years of our struggle we realise the true situation. The first statement was in the nature of a challenge and a feeler, the second is the result of the country's reaction to the first. In the first he declared the thing that he holds dearer than life itself—truth and non-violence and khadi, reform and revolution through conversion and not compulsion—and said that as one section of the country was running away from these articles of faith and as the other was giving no effect to the allegiance to them which it professed from year to year there was nothing for it but for him to retire from the Congress. In the second statement he declares his conviction that his retirement is inescapable, but as he retires in order to be of more service to the Congress and the country than heretofore he also suggested a reform in the constitution which alone can save the Congress from disruption.

### GANDHIJI'S RETIREMENT

Now that leaders like Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. Ansari and the Khan Brothers have given their hearty assent to the correctness of Gandhiji's decision I do not think it is necessary for me to take up your time discussing the pros and cons of the question of his retirement. I should certainly have done so if my own mind ran counter to the opinions of these colleagues but I am in hearty agreement with them, though the mind and heart both boggle at the thought of his retirement. But I am steadied as soon as I remind myself that his decision proceeds out of the depth of his devotion to truth and non-violence and it must spur us on to further effort towards those ideals.

But though Mahatmaji has made up his mind not to seek the vote of the Congress on things that make up the warp and woof of his life, I would ask you not to dismiss those things without a thought, and would urge you to realise their implications and to give them some place at least in your programme and your policies. Though I do not claim to have the same living and active faith as Mahatma Gandhi in those things that he has taught some of us at least to hold dear, I must declare my creed and my conviction about them.

### AMENDMENT OF THE CREED

About the amendment in the creed, I would ask you only one question. Have we really understood by "peaceful and legitimate" anything but "truthful and non-violence" all these years? Has the world outside understood our creed differently? All the credit that we can take to-day and all the discredit that critics and our self-introspecting hearts pour upon us spring from the fact that we have kept that lofty creed as our ideal. The world should cease to watch our fight with interest if our creed meant anything less than it has meant all these years. Whatever the failure of our civil resistance to civilise our rulers, there is no gainsaying the fact that there should have been much more unashamed brutality than we have been the victims of, if there had not been this great creed proclaimed by us.

### THE KHADI CLAUSE

I next come to the yarn franchise and to the much discussed khadi clause. I may say without being guilty of national vanity that there is no other Flag in the world which expresses in itself purer and loftier ideals. It rules out in one sweep the fourfold curse of modern humanity, viz., imperialism, militarism, capitalism, and industrialism.

The spinning wheel and khadi are not only the living link between the classes and the masses, they are symbols of the country's determination to resist all forms of exploitation by non-violent means. They represent an era of purification of politics and private life. Remove the khadi clause and you will snap the living link between the cities and the villages.

## THE TRIPPLE FORCE

To my mind Truth, Non-violence and Khadi represent a triple force whereby we can achieve the whole of the Karachi programme and more.

There is a section of our countrymen who without having achieved even what we pledged ourselves to do at Karachi insist on crying for more. Whilst I would have no objection to amplifying the Karachi programme and elucidating it wherever there may be any fear of a misunderstanding, I would say emphatically that we should do nothing that compromises by one iota the creed of non-violence. Whatever may be our failures, we have made rapid strides. Let us not by our impatience undo the work of the last fifteen years.

## A WORD TO SOCIALISTS

My friends, the socialists, are keen on a more inspiring ideology and would hasten the elimination of all that stands for exploitation. I should like to tell them in all humility but with all the force at my command that there is no greater ideology than is expressed by the creed of truth and non-violence and the determination of the country not to eliminate the men that stand for exploitation but the forces that do so. Our quarrel is with the sin and not the sinner which we all are to a greater or less degree. Compulsion will react on us with redoubled force; conversion, however slow it may seem, will be the shortest cut and will mean a new contribution to history and civilisation.

## CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Having said this, I would say a word about the reform in the constitution that Mahatmaji has suggested in his second statement. He recommends that the size of the Congress should be considerably curtailed and the representation in the Congress should reflect its hold on the country as a whole. It has been suggested that to make the Congress an efficient deliberative body, the number of delegates should be reduced from 6,000 to 1,000, and each delegate should be regarded not as a representative of a set number of people living within a particular area but should be regarded as in fact he is a representative of the members of the Congress roll and give to those places and provinces proportionally larger representation in the Congress, that will have more members on their rolls and that have been more active in carrying out the Congress programme. Whether they, the members, represent the whole nation or not will depend upon the quantity and quality of service they render. The Congress influence and hold over the people have never depended upon the number on the actual register but they depend upon what it stands for and the sacrifice that the members have made for achieving the goal.

In conclusion, I would say that in considering Mahatmaji's statements you should remove from your minds any apprehension that you may have that he is going to retire from public life or that not being physically connected with the Congress his interest will cease or that his help will not be available. I have no such apprehension.

I am sure his separation is intended to strengthen and help us and not in any way to weaken or hinder us. I feel that Mahatma Gandhi outside the Congress which does not whole-heartedly accept his programme will be more helpful to the country and the Congress than Mahatma Gandhi inside the Congress with the drag of a big unbelieving majority at his back.

I do not, therefore, feel any shock over his impending separation. I do not minimise the effect of such a decision, if he comes to it, but I wish you to have faith in him and I have no doubt that all will be right, whether he decides to work from within or from outside the Congress.

## CONCLUSION

Let us start with a clean slate on the work in front of us. The need of the hour is not for a bigger or more inspiring programme, but for the determination to achieve what little we may set before ourselves. The task is immense. There is to-day a greater determination on the part of the rulers not to part with power, as they have succeeded in creating disruption in our ranks.

## THE ORDINANCE RULE

The ordinance rule of the past four years indicates the extent to which Government can go to suppress the movement for freedom, even though it may be pro-

bably non-violent. Bengal and N. W. Frontier have been raped seemingly beyond repair. It is difficult to breathe free in the one and it is impossible to understand the situation in the other. There have been deplorable acts of terrorism in Bengal, but unmanning the whole youth of vast areas is not the way to fight it. The N. W. Frontier Province which has had a severe spell of repression which the brave Pathans led by that selfless and patriotic servant Abdul Gaffar Khan have borne with exemplary restraint is forbidden ground for him and for his brother. There is constructive work enough and to spare, to occupy the time and energies of those who care for it.

The resolution on cent per cent Swadeshi that Mahatmaji has embodied in his second statement is a vital one. If the infatuation with high-sounding slogans has not blinded our reasons we should see that khadi with cent per cent Swadeshi is enough to take us to our goal of complete independence which in Mahatmaji's language "is an impossible dream without the higher classes merging themselves in those millions who are miscalled lower classes."

#### THE COUNCIL PROGRAMME

There is lastly the Councils programme. The All-India Congress Committee has decided to contest elections to the Legislative Assembly, so that the country might pronounce its verdict on the White Paper and the repressive policy of the Government. I hope that the electors will show by unmistakable action that the Congress possesses their full confidence.

Let us not, however, be led away by the idea that Swaraj can be achieved by anything we could do in the legislatures. We have to remember that the price for freedom must be paid before we can get it, and while we have every reason to be proud of what has been done and what the country has suffered it is, after all, yet inadequate for the great object we have in view. The task we have taken upon ourselves is great and glorious. It requires inexhaustible patience, unflinching determination and unending sacrifice. Time and world forces are helping us and above all, God is with us in this great epic struggle of an unarmed people fighting with the weapons of Satyagraha of Truth and Non-Violence—a most powerful Government armed cap-a-pie and equipped with the latest engines of destruction devised by science and human ingenuity. For us there is no turning back. The goal is clear, it is nothing short of Independence.

#### THE MEANING OF INDEPENDENCE

Independence is the natural outcome of all that the freedom movement in India has stood for. It cannot mean isolation particularly when we remember that it has to be achieved by non-violence. It means the end of exploitation of one country by another and of one part of the population of the same country by another part. It contemplates a free and friendly association with other nations for the mutual benefit of all. It forebodes evil to none, not even to those exploiting us except in so far as they rely upon exploitation rather than goodwill. The sanction behind this Independence movement is non-violence which in its positive and dynamic aspect is good will of and for all.

We already see signs of how it has begun appealing to a certain extent to world opinion. This appeal has to become irresistible. It can do so according as the element of distrust and suspicion which has its birth in fear is eliminated and replaced by a sense of security born of confidence in the goodwill of India. India having no designs on others will not then need a large army either for its protection against foreigners or for internal peace which will stand guaranteed by the goodwill of other inhabitants. Having no designs on others she will be able to claim immunity from the evil designs of others and her safety will be buttressed and protected by the goodwill of the world at large. Conceived in this light, our independence ought not to frighten even the British unless they aim at perpetuating the present unnatural conditions.

The method too is crystal clear. It is active dynamic non-violent mass action. We may fail once; we may fail twice; but we are bound to succeed some day. Many have lost their lives and all. Many more have sacrificed themselves in their struggle for freedom. Let us not be deterred by the difficulties which confront us nor diverted from our straight course by fear or favour. Our weapons are unique and the world is watching the progress of great experiment with interest and high expectation. Let us be true to our creed and firm in our determination. Satya-

graha in its active application may meet with temporary setbacks but it knows no defeat. It is itself a great victory, for as James Lowell put it,

"Truth for ever on the scaffold  
Wrong for ever on the throne  
Yet that scaffold sways the future  
And behind the dim unknown  
Standeth God within the shadow  
Keeping watch above His own."

### Proceedings and Resolutions

The *President* then asked the audience to stand up for a minute in memory of the Congressmen who had died during the last year.

#### Past Resolutions of Working Committee

After a minute's silence had been observed, *Dr. Ansari* moved the first resolution, which requested the endorsement of the resolutions passed by the Working Committee since May, 1934, including those relating to the Parliamentary Board, Constructive Programme, the status of Indians overseas, the resolution on Swadeshi and condolence resolutions.

*Dr. Ansari* explained in Hindustani the various resolutions. Referring to the resolutions regarding the Parliamentary Board, he said that Congressmen in legislatures would prove more useful than any other political group. They were pledged to get the Ordinances repealed, to reject the White Paper and to work out a programme for convening a Constituent Assembly. This triple programme of the Board, the speaker said, would greatly help the cause of achieving independence and removing communal differences in the country. The second part of the resolution, he said, referred to the constructive programme, while the third related to the rights of Indians in Zanzibar. Further, the resolution placed on record the sacrifice of those who gave their lives in the last struggle, which part they had already adopted standing.

*Dr. Ansari* denied that the programme of the Parliamentary Board was reactionary. He said that it would be accusing the Congress of being reactionary, because it had supported the programme.

Opposing the demand to get the clause relating to class war repealed, *Dr. Ansari* maintained that Congress mentality was thoroughly Socialist and he and his friends in the Congress were as good, or perhaps better Socialists, than any of those who claimed to be Socialists.

*Dr. Ansari* appealed to Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney to reconsider the stand they had taken on the Communal Award issue. He pointed out that the Congress stood for a communal settlement without the intervention of outsiders and said that was the best and most patriotic policy.

Speaking in English, in response to repeated requests of a section of the audience, *Dr. Ansari* explained briefly his Hindi speech, asserting that the programme and policy which had been laid down by the Congress and the Parliamentary Board could not be improved under the present circumstances.

A prolonged stampede, in the overcrowded visitors' gallery, occurred just before *Mr. Nariman* came up to second the resolution. Volunteers rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control, a few hundred visitors being given seats elsewhere. By the time the proceedings commenced, the visitors' galleries were fully packed and contained at least 80,000 visitors.

*Mr. Nariman*, seconding the resolution, said that there were Congressmen in the country who had conscientious objections to the Congress Parliamentary Board programme, but he pointed out that every country, fighting for freedom, had made use of the country's legislatures, however defective. He admitted that freedom could not be achieved through the Councils. (Cheers). Still there was no harm in using them for preparing for the coming fight and the creation of the revolutionary mentality. He felt certain that if they carried out the Parliamentary programme and worked in the country, especially in the villages, they would be able to give a better and tougher battle to the enemies of Indian freedom. He was sure that in less than ten years, there would once more be a great movement for freedom and revolution in India. (Cheers).

The speaker appealed to Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney not to weaken the



Congress by creating dissensions. The real object was not the removal of the Communal Award, but the attainment of complete independence.

#### ADJOURNMENT MOTION ON POLICE BAN RULED OUT

*Mr. Purshottam Tricumdas* moved an adjournment of the House for five minutes on matters of important business, namely, the Police Commissioner's ban on labour demonstrations. He said that bans in these days had become common not only against Satyagrahis but against all and sundry. When he referred to the lathi charges, cries of 'shame' rang out. He wanted them not to consider themselves as separate from the workers. If the procession had been allowed, nothing untoward would have happened.

The loud speaker failed when the *President* was about to speak and this caused restlessness among the audience.

The *President* stated that a few days back some Labour leaders had approached him and asked his permission to use the pandal and address the Congress delegates. He had consulted the authorities of the Reception Committee and allotted some time on Sunday for the purpose. They were not aware of any procession coming to-day. The Secretary of the Reception Committee had received a letter yesterday from the Police Commissioner, asking if any permission was given to any procession. A reply was sent stating that no such permission was asked for and they would not like such people coming to the Pandal, who had no business to come and had sought no permission for it. He did not know if the Police Commissioner had issued the ban after this letter. They did not know exactly what had taken place and therefore, he ruled the motion out of order.

#### Communal Award

The *President* then asked *Pandit Malaviya* to move his amendment.

The amendment was a long one, the chief idea of which was the substitution of the rejection of the Communal Award instead of 'neither accepting nor rejecting it'. He also wanted the omission of the expression: 'The White Paper lapsing, the Communal Award must lapse automatically. Among other things, it must be the duty of the Constituent Assembly to determine the method of representation of important minorities and make provision for otherwise safeguarding their interests. Since, however, different communities in the country were sharply divided on the question of the Communal Award, it is necessary to define the Congress attitude on it. The Congress claims to represent equally all communities composing the Indian nation and, therefore, in view of the division of opinion can neither accept nor reject the Communal Award, as long as divisions of opinion last'.

Putting up a vigorous defence of his amendment, *Pandit Malaviya* said that the plea that the Communal Award would lapse with the lapse of the White Paper was wrong. They were independent of each other and the result of the Congress policy would be virtual acceptance of the Communal Award. The British Government had made it clear that the Communal Award was the final decision on the subject, while they were prepared for modifications in the White Paper. The Constituent Assembly could come into existence, according to *Pandit Jawaharlal*, only after the overthrow of the present regime. *Mr. Gandhi* had also agreed with him but had added that it was possible to convene such an assembly with the Government's consent. The speaker considered it foolish to expect the same Government to allow them to convene a Constituent Assembly which had inflicted the White Paper and Communal Award on them.

*Pandit Malaviya* explained how he had agreed to the decision of the British Premier on the subject, not in his official capacity but in his individual capacity. Referring to the attempt at unity in 1932, in Allahabad, he said that they failed because the Government had spoiled their attempt by offering Muslims something more than what the Unity Conference offered. "I am prepared even now to work for an agreed settlement between the communities, for "I consider it a shameful reproach that any outsider should sit in judgment on a purely domestic affair". (Cheer)

*Pandit Malaviya* complained that the present Congress attitude was inconsistent with the attitude *Mr. Gandhi* took at London, when he said that the Congress would go into the wilderness for ten years rather than accept a scheme based on electorates. He asked Nationalist Muslims why they did not agree with him in rejecting the Award, when they had condemned it before. "If you feel it is poisonous and anti-national, then why do you object to its rejection?" (Cheer)

*Mr. M. S. Aney* seconded the amendment. He said that the neutral attitude of



the Congress members of the Assembly on Communal Award would result in the virtual acceptance of the Award by the Assembly. This, in turn, would be taken as acceptance of the Award by the whole community, since the Congress was going to be represented.

## SECOND DAY—BOMBAY—27th. OCTOBER 1934

The Congress Nagar was busier to-day than yesterday and even four hours before the Session, fleets of buses and cars brought in countless visitors into the camp, so that the attendance to-day was larger than at the opening session. One factor, which was responsible for this was that Saturday being a half holiday, thousands of city employees swelled the crowd. Volunteers were able to devote undivided attention at the pandal, as the Congress Subjects Committee did not sit in the afternoon and relieved quite a large number of volunteers, who had been guarding its pandal against intruders. Another reason why a larger crowd of educated people attended to-day was that the debate on the Communal Award was expected to hold the floor for the major part of the evening and lively scenes were anticipated.

### POLICE PRECAUTIONS

Following yesterday's forcible dispersal of labour demonstrators who insisted on taking a procession along the prohibited rout into the Congress Nagar, Police precautions both around and along the roads leading to the Nagar had been doubled. Motor lorries carrying lathi police, headed by an officer, were patrolling the entire locality.

In the meanwhile, an angry crowd of labourers, numbering several hundreds, had assembled at Lalbaug, three miles from the Nagar, to record their protest against the dispersal of the procession yesterday. Arrangements in the pandal had undergone some changes in the light of yesterday's experience. For instance, pressmen who suffered yesterday from a defect on the loudspeaker, found their enclosure moved further up. Leaders took their seats one by one on the dais, while the band played. The last visitors' galleries were nearly full at 6 p. m. but still there was a terrible rush for admission at the gates. A cry of "Rajen Babu-ki-jai" rent the air when the President entered the pandal accompanied by leaders. Proceedings commenced at 6-15 p. m. with national song.

### REJECT PARLIAMENTARY PROGRAMME

Songs by ladies took half an hour, whereafter the President informed the House that considering the number of amendments received, there might be no less than 25 speakers. He, therefore, allotted five minutes for each speaker.

*Mr. Narendra Dev* moved an amendment for throwing out the Parliamentary programme and deleting the resolutions relating to Socialists. He explained that the Lahore resolution on complete Independence had laid down complete boycott of legislatures as the first step towards the achievement of Independence. They could not change the front. It was mere waste of time to go to legislatures and it was a grave mistake to hope that the programme would carry them nearer their goal.

Referring to Pandit Malaviya's amendment, the speaker said that the fear that the Communal Award would stand even when the White Paper fell, was baseless. If India developed strength to achieve Independence, she would have strength to reject the Award and evolve an amicable settlement between the communities. In that case, of course, communal leaders would lose their hold on the masses.

*Mrs. Kamaladevi Chottopadhaya*, seconding the amendment, said that unless the Parliamentary programme was useful to the masses, Socialists could not support it. She ridiculed the idea of a challenge from the Government, remarking that the challenge had been in existence since the day the East India Company set foot in India. She was surprised that the Congress should oppose class-war and expropriation of property, which was bound to exist as long as a small minority held power and exploited the majority.

### FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE ON AWARD

*Mr. J. C. Gupta* moved an amendment asking freedom of conscience for Congress candidates to the Assembly elections on the question of the Communal Award. He urged the acceptance of his amendment, if Pandit Malaviya's amendment was thrown out. It would lessen the harmful effect of the Working Committee's resolution. When freedom of conscience was granted to Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney, he did not know why it should be refused to others.

### ENLARGE CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

Mr. Kanitkar moved an amendment for enlarging the constructive programme by including the improvement of agriculture, physical training and village panchayats in the programme.

Maulvi Abdus Salam objected to the wording of the resolution which said that Mussalmans in general had accepted the Communal Award. He pointed out that Nationalist Muslims and Shias had condemned the Award and therefore, it was not right to say that it was acceptable to Muslims. He supported Pandit Malaviya's view and wanted the Congress to totally reject the Award as otherwise the present attitude would virtually result in its acceptance.

### PRESIDENT WARNS INTERRUPTERS

Mr. Sidhwa, who spoke next, was constantly interrupted by a section of the House and the President had to administer a severe warning to spectators to stick to their seats and not to interrupt the peaceful conduct of business. Mr. Sidhwa condemned the attitude of the Congress nationalist Party, which had done the greatest harm to India. (Cheers and counter-cries of "withdraw"). Mr. Sidhwa asked the audience to follow the Congress lead and save the Congress prestige by adopting the Working Committee's resolution. People wanted freedom. They did not care for a seat here and a seat there and who got it. (Cheers). "This is the time for the test," he added. "Guard yourself against false cries and alarms and vote solidly for the original resolution."

Mr. T. C. Goswami, in a vigorous speech, answered Pandit Malaviya's criticism. He also was constantly interrupted by a section of the House, whom the President reprimanded. Mr. Goswami continued his speech in spite of the interruptions.

Mr. Ali Bahadur Khan supported Mr. Narendra Dev's amendment. He complained that the Parliamentary programme would create a defeatist mentality and demoralise the country.

Acharya Kripalani answered the points raised by Socialist speakers. He emphasised that what the Congress was opposed to, was unlawful confiscation of property. Referring to the criticism against the Constituent Assembly, the speaker pointed out that even Pandit Jawaharlal had always favoured the idea of a Constituent Assembly, and had even approved of separate representation for important minorities on the Constituent Assembly. The Congress stood for the masses, and Mr. Gandhi had identified himself with them.

Mr. Gopal Singh Quzmi supported Pandit Malaviya's amendment. He said the Working Committee, by their attitude, had displeased the Sikh community, who had always been called upon to bear the brunt of the struggle for freedom in the Punjab. He criticised those who labelled the supporters of Pandit Malaviya as Communalists, and referred to the case of Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, who was still suffering imprisonment. It was not a question of Hindus or Sikhs, but a matter of national prestige. The speaker declared that he was ready to support Dr. Kitchlew if he stood for election against any communalist Sikh. He strongly condemned the attitude of "Neither acceptance nor rejection" which he characterised as anti-National. He concluded with a strong appeal for support to Pandit Malaviya.

### PRESIDENT AGAIN INTERVENES

Mr. Hari Mohan Chatterjee was greeted with cries of 'sit down', when he condemned Pandit Malaviya. The President, intervening, asked the delegates to address the chair and not the speaker. The President added that he would himself pull up a speaker if he found that his remarks were unparliamentary. Continuing Mr. Chatterjee said that the honour of the Congress was at stake and he wanted to know if they would vote with those 114 members of the Subjects Committee who voted against Pandit Malaviya or would vote for Pandit Malaviya, knowing that he did not find more than a dozen supporters in the Subjects Committee. He urged the delegates to reject Pandit Malaviya's amendment with one voice.

### SARDAR PATEL'S APPEAL TO PANDIT MALAVIYA

Sardar Vallabhbhai received a great ovation when rose to support the original resolution moved by Dr. Ansari. He pointed out that the whole country was in favour of Council-entry and it was too late in the day to re-open the subject. A dozen Congress candidates had already been elected unopposed and there could be no going back on that issue. If they had any doubts about the programme, they

must remember that the Council policy was to be guided by the Working Committee, with whom the final control would always rest. Sardar Patel strongly objected to the remarks of Mr. Gopal Singh who said that the Working Committee blindly followed Mr. Gandhi. Referring to the Communal Award, the speaker said that no one liked the Award, which was anti-national and purposely designed to divide the country. He pointed out that the Working Committee, excepting Mr. Aney, was unanimous on the subject. They all respected Pandit Malaviya and appreciated his point of view, but they felt that the line of action adopted by Pandit Malaviya was wrong. He appealed to Pandit Malaviya even now to desist from the course he was pursuing. The question before them, said the speaker, was now to alter the Communal Award. It would be possible only by bringing in the different communities together. The way Pandit Malaviya and the Congress Nationalist Party was following would surely result in perpetuating the Communal Award. With due deference to Pandit Malaviya, the speaker said that it was a grave mistake, on the part of the Pandit, to organise a separate party. If such things continued, it would ruin the Congress and he, therefore, earnestly appealed to Pandit Malaviya even at this late hour to retrace his steps. Addressing the Socialists, the speaker said that their attitude of opposing the Parliamentary programme was equally wrong. It was not the attitude of practical men. He urged all delegates to stand by the Working Committee.

The *President* stated that Pandit Malaviya wanted to say something in reply to Sardar Vallabhbhai's remarks regarding the formation of the Nationalist Party, but he refused permission to allow him to speak, for he felt that further discussion on the subject was needless. Closure was asked for and carried.

Dr. *Ansari*, in his reply to the criticism by Pandit Malaviya, referred to the long wire he had sent from Vienna to Mr. Gandhi and the Working Committee. He said that he was compelled to send that wire on account of the attitude adopted by Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney. He had only stressed on the wire that he stood by the decisions arrived at at Ranchi and Patna after full consideration.

Clearing the position of Nationalist Muslims, regarding the Communal Award, Dr. Ansari said that their opinion remained unchanged. They believed that the only solution of the problem was an amicable settlement between the parties concerned. They would try for it and would not rest content till they had found the solution of this problem. The President appealed to non-delegates, who were said to have mixed with the delegates, not to participate in the voting.

The amendments and the resolution were put to vote and resulted in the rejection of all amendments and the adoption of the resolution.

Considerable difficulty was experienced in counting the votes. The President accompanied by Mr. Jairamdas Daulatram and Mr. Nariman, went up the rostrum and with the help of flash lights directed on the delegates' galleries ascertained the sense of the House by show of hands.

A poll was demanded after the first amendment was declared lost, but the President refused the poll on the ground that the majority had been overwhelming.

Confusion prevailed in the amphi-theatre, volunteer arrangements having completely broken down. Visitors rushed into the gangways and the President's voice was drowned in the uproar. Cries of "Shame" from the Bengal group greeted the declaration of the result of Pandit Malaviya's amendment.

The President had to repeatedly appeal for order and as even delegates stood up, he observed: "You cannot have more hands by standing up." (Laughter).

Babu Rajendra Prasad, however, proceeded with the counting work and with considerable difficulty announced the results of voting on the various amendments.

The declaration that all amendments having been rejected the original resolution was adopted by a huge majority, was drowned in loud applause and counter cries of 'shame'.

### Faith in Non-Violence

Mrs. *Sarojini Naidu* then went up the rostrum to move the next resolution, congratulating the nation on the sacrifices and sufferings and reiterating the nation's faith in non-violent civil resistance. The oratory of Mrs. Naidu gradually silenced the House who, after shouting for nearly an hour, settled down to listen to her.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu made a stirring speech in moving the resolution. She eloquently dwelt on the marvellous qualities of the gospel of civil resistance in adopting which India had demonstrated a unique method to the world. The country's response to this gospel had been magnificent and had stunned the world. She paid

a tribute to the City of Bombay, which had borne the brunt of the struggle. She denied that they had been beaten or their spirit crushed. How could their spirit and courage be crushed? The world so far knew of revolutions accompanied by the shedding of blood, but Mr. Gandhi had preached a different doctrine.

"Mahatma Gandhi-ki-Jai", cried Mrs Naidu, and added "The Mahatma has given the world a new gospel and a new civilisation". (Cheers). He had asked them to fight more with the qualities of the mind than of brute force. The battle was not over. The movement had been suspended for a little while. Mr. Gandhi, though he was retiring from the Congress, would still continue to be their guardian and the source of inspiration. Civil resistance was more than a substitute for terrorism. It was a great unifier. The sacrifice, which it demanded, cemented all difference and merged them into one force.

*Sardar Sardul Singh* paid a tribute to *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel* for his refusal to be released conditionally, even to perform the last rites of his brother, the late Mr. Vallabhbhai. Similarly, *Pandit Jawaharlal* was still refusing to secure conditional release to nurse his sick wife. This spirit shown by *Sardar Vallabhbhai* and *Pandit Jawaharlal* was the result of the new mentality created by Mr. Gandhi's teaching of non-violent civil resistance and the speaker felt certain that by following the methods, they would reach their goal of Independence.

*Babu Sampurnanand* moved an amendment to substitute the words "belief in mass direct action of a peaceful nature." He said that they believed in peaceful methods, but to go further than that and say things which they did not seriously mean was to practise hypocrisy. The speaker pointed out that they had given up part of non-co-operation such as boycott of schools, colleges and law courts, in which they had believed in 1921. Where then was sense in saying that they had undying faith in non-violent non-co-operation? He wanted them to be honest and say only things in which they believed and which were practicable.

*Mr. P. Y. Deshpande* seconded the amendment.

*Mr. Purushottamdas Tandon* made a suggestion regarding the altering of the language of the resolution.

*Mrs. Naidu* accepted *Mr. Purushottamdas Tandon's* suggestion and amended her resolution so that, instead of stating that non-violent means are a "complete substitute" for violent means, the resolution will now say that non-violent means are "better means" than violent means.

The amendment of *Mr. Sampurnanand* was rejected and *Mrs. Naidu's* resolution was passed.

Resolutions regarding *Mrs. Kamala Nehru's* illness and the election of the Parliamentary Board were put from the chair and passed.

The President adjourned the Congress till 6 p. m. the next day, and announced that there would be a Labour demonstration in the pandal in the morning.

### THIRD DAY—BOMBAY—28th. OCTOBER 1934

There was a touching scene in the Congress pandal to-day as *Mr. Gandhi* entered. The entire audience of over 80,000 stood up to a man to have a look at the Mahatma whose official connection with the Congress ceased from this day. Considering the undiminished hold he had on the masses people found it difficult to believe that he was retiring. To-day's gathering was the largest as they hoped to hear *Mr. Gandhi* speak. Being a holiday and the last day of the session, a record crowd of visitors attended to-day's session of the Congress.

Although the session was scheduled to commence at 6 p. m. a regular stream of motor-cars and buses deposited thousands of visitors into the Congress Nagar as early as 2 p. m. and by 4 p. m. the entire Worli area was a sea of humanity.

In view of last night's breakdown of volunteer arrangements and rush of visitors towards the Presidential platform, the Reception Committee authorities had taken extra precautions to-day to prevent similar interruption of proceedings. The Volunteer Force inside the Pandal to keep the visitors within the limit of their enclosures had been trebled and new barricades put up.

Just before proceedings began *Mr. Patil*, General Secretary of the Reception Committee, requested all delegates and members of the A. I. C. C. to be the guests of the Reception Committee at a launch to be given to meet them the next day noon. *Mr. Patil* also announced that there would be a musical concert the next day



under the auspices of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, the proceeds of which would be given to aid Gujrat peasants.

#### Village Industries Association

Dr. *Pattabhi Sitaramayya*, speaking in Hindi, said that the Congress has been in existence for fifty years now, but for more than thirty years, it had paid no heed to the organisation of the villages. The resolution before the House was intended to reconstruct villages with a view to making them self-sufficient. The proposed All-India Village Industries' Association would help the revival of old village Industries, which were dying because of the serious competition of machine-made goods. The work, he said, was entrusted to enable economist like Mr. J. C. Kumarappa, and he would be working under the direct supervision of Mr. Gandhi.

*Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan* received a ovation as he came to the rostrum to second the resolution.

#### A STAMPEDE

The vast gathering had hardly settled down to hear speeches, when the alarm raised by the Congress Nagar Fire brigade engines spread panic among the audience and caused a stampede in a section of the amphitheatre, but volunteers rushed up and informed the audience that there was nothing serious. The carburettor of one of the cars parked in the Worli promenade had caught fire which, however, was put out instantly.

*Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan* said that he believed real constructive work and the revival of indigenous industries were impossible without Swaraj. They were struggling for achieving that end, but till it was achieved, they could not leave Indian villages alone. The state of villages and villagers was pitiable. They were starving and ill-clad. His recent visit to Bengal had convinced him that organising industries like spinning not only gave food to poor villagers, but also created political consciousness among them. He appealed to them to support the proposed association wholeheartedly and help in working out the scheme when it was ready.

#### CONTROL OF INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION

Mr. *Majumdar* moved an amendment demanding control that the proposed Village Industries Association should be vested in the Congress. He was seconded by his wife.

#### SOCIALIST OPPOSITION

Mr. *Jaiprakash* (Socialist) opposing the resolution said that the Congress aim was the attainment of complete independence [and not the opening of factories and industrial homes. The industrial revival of the country and the reconstruction of villages were impossible without freedom. Such attempts would only fritter away the energy of the Congress, which was a primarily political organisation and must restrict itself to mass organisation for giving fight to the forces of imperialism.

*Seth Govinddas* supported the resolution. He was surprised to see Socialists opposing the resolution. He pointed out that provinces like Gujerat and Bihar, where they had Khadi organisations, did better than other provinces in the last Satyagraha movement. The organising of village industries helped them to reach villagers and create consciousness among them and prepared them for the struggle for freedom.

*Acharya Kripalani* supported the resolution. The resolution regarding the Village Industries Association, was put to the House and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT MOTION RULED OUT

The *President* announced that a member had given notice of adjournment of the House to protest against the Subject Committee's decision to refer undisposed of non-official resolutions to the Working Committee. The President ruled the motion out of order.

#### Organisation of Exhibitions

The President then moved from the chair a resolution proposing to hand over to the Spinners' Association and the Village Industries' Association the organisation of Congress exhibitions. The resolution was passed.



### Changes in Constitution

The *President* next announced that *Mr. Gandhi* would move a resolution proposing changes in the Congress constitution. This announcement led to continuous cheers and shouts of "Gandhi-ki-Jai" from all sides of the pandal.

*Mr. Patwardhan* wanted to move an amendment to the Congress creed.

The *President* ruled it out of order, as the amendment had not been given notice of in time and the creed was not before the House.

*Mr. Gandhi* then moved the resolution proposing changes in the Congress Constitution. There was pin-drop silence throughout *Mr. Gandhi's* speech.

Explaining the changes, *Mr. Gandhi* said that experience had shown that 6,000 delegates were an unwieldy number. At the Nagpur Congress, they were 14,000 delegates, but they were not elected by any constituencies and represented mostly themselves. Now it was proposed to reduce the delegates to 2,000. He wanted only 1,000 delegates, but had yielded to opposition and made it 2,000. He wanted the delegates to agree to this sacrifice in number in the cause of freedom.

*Mr. Gandhi* added that there was, at present, no direct contact between delegates and electors. This Constitution would not get them Swaraj but would help the Congress to stand as a rival to the Assembly in showing that the Congress delegates also spoke for their electorate. Hereafter, Congress Inspectors would look into the registers and only such Congressmen would be allowed to vote as had been on its rolls for at least six months. Unless there were 500 Congressmen they could not elect a delegate to the Congress. This was too poor compared to the Assembly, where 8,000 voters elected a member, but he was satisfied with such a beginning for an organisation representing the poor. As Swaraj could not be attained without roping the villages into the Congress scheme, it had been provided that three-fourths of the Congress shall be reserved for rural areas, with a population of 10,000 under.

*Mr. Gandhi* next explained that representation would be by the single transferable vote and that there would be plural constituencies. As for the A. I. C. C., it was always difficult to call 350 members, who could not afford the expense of frequent meetings. Thus the A. I. C. C. had been reduced to a maximum of 166.

Then again no democrat would like that the Congress President should be elected by the Reception Committee on the recommendations of Provincial Congress Committees, but hereafter delegates themselves would elect the President. He also explained the Khadi Clause and the Spinning Franchise and said that he did not mind if they rejected these, but if they adopted them they should do so with absolute conviction. He finally asked the delegates to vote for the resolution not out of regard for him, but in the interests of the Motherland.

Addressing the House in English, *Mr. Gandhi* said that it was impossible to pour out one's soul again in another language. The resolution was of a far-reaching character. It called upon the Congress to repeat its history of self-denial and further to reduce the size of delegates and the A. I. C. C.

As *Mr. Gandhi* was proceeding to give a summary of his scheme, visitors, who had no interest in an English speech, began to move out of the pandal and the noise thus caused drowned *Mr. Gandhi's* voice.

Concluding, *Mr. Gandhi* appealed to delegates to adopt the new constitution with a desire to make it a glorious success. (Applause).

His speech had lasted 75 minutes. He delivered it, seated on a table on the rostrum with floodlights projected on him from three angles. Seated between two microphones, one conveying his voice to 80,000 enthusiastic listeners and the other connected to the sound car of a film company, *Mr. Gandhi* spoke at length, adapting his style to make a direct appeal to the common people.

*Mr. K. M. Munshi* seconded the resolution. *Mr. Munshi* said that the proposals would make the constitution more businesslike and lead to solidarity and efficiency in the Congress organisation.

### SOCIALIST AMENDMENT REJECTED

*Mr. Deshpande* moved an amendment, proposing circulation of the proposals and their consideration at the next session.

*Mr. Purushottam Tricunddas* seconded the amendment.

*Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, opposing the Socialist amendment, said that drafting the constitution was a difficult job and all delegates were not expected to take keen interest. The plea of insufficient time, he said, was untenable. The new constitution was the result of *Mr. Gandhi's* fifteen years' experience and, although they

might not take into consideration Mr. Gandhi's personality, they could not ignore his experience. He did not understand the fear of Socialists, who were young and accused older men like the speaker, of reactionary mentality. It was wrong to say that if they accepted the proposals, Mr. Gandhi would be tempted to stay in the Congress. He appealed to the delegates to remove that idea and support the proposals on their merits. He did not understand Socialist opposition to them after the unanimous adoption of the proposals by the Special Sub-Committee on which Socialists were represented.

The *President* announced that Mr. Purushottam Tricumdas refuted Sardar Vallabhbhai's statement that Socialists had accepted the proposals in the Committee.

The Socialist amendment of Mr. *Deshpande* was put to vote and rejected by an overwhelming majority.

#### KHADDAR CLAUSE

The *President* next called upon *Pandit Harihar Shastri* to move his amendment that the clause relating to the habitual wearing of khaddar be deleted.

*Pandit Sashtri* appealed for the acceptance of the amendment not in the name of Socialism but of Congress prestige.

Mr. *A. V. Patwardhan*, seconding the amendment, said that Socialists had no grudge against Khaddar. They themselves wore Khaddar but they did not believe that Khaddar would bring them Swaraj. They wanted even those who had no faith in Khaddar to come into the Congress and work for it.

*Dr. Choitram Gidwani* opposed the Socialist amendment, as he did not consider it was a difficult thing to wear Khaddar if they wanted to hold offices in the Congress.

The amendment was negatived.

#### FRANCHISE

Mr. *Purushottam Tricumdas* opposed the spinning and labour franchise clause. This clause, in his opinion, was on a par with several sentimental things they were accustomed to say. What a poor labourer needed was not their sentimental sympathy but means to live. He did not understand what the phrase "on behalf of the Congress" meant. If it meant an additional half hour's labour for the Congress, "it was a disgraceful thing to expect a labourer to do, after his day's hard labour".

When the speaker made certain remarks about Dr. Ansari and Mr. Bhulabhai Desai, the President interrupted him and asked him not to mention names.

*Sardar Sardul Singh*, supporting Mr. Gandhi's proposition, refuted Mr. Purushottam's charge that Congressmen were sentimental. He asserted that the Congress was the best sympathiser with the labouring classes. He maintained that there was nothing derogatory in manual labour. Socialists were talking about the masses but the only man, who worked day in and day out for them was Mr. Gandhi. He, therefore, appealed to the House to accept the resolution.

The original proposition of Mr. Gandhi was carried by a huge majority.

Thereafter the entire proposition of Mr. Gandhi containing the Khaddar Clause, the Spinning Franchise and other constitutional amendments was put to vote and declared carried by a large majority.

#### Gandhiji's Retirement

Mr. *Sidhwa* moved the following amended resolution on Mr. Gandhi's retirement. Mr. Rajagopalachariar wanted to move it in the Subjects Committee, but had been disallowed.

"This Congress reiterates its confidence in the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and is emphatically of the opinion that he should reconsider his decision to retire from the Congress, but inasmuch as all efforts to persuade him in that behalf have failed, this Congress, while reluctantly accepting his decision, places on record its deep sense of gratitude to him for the unique services rendered by him to the nation and notes with satisfaction his assurance that his advice and guidance will be available to the Congress whenever necessary".

Mr. *Sidhwa* said that the resolution was so clear that it did not require any further exposition. Mr. Gandhi's complaint that people did not adhere to truth and non-violence was not fair. They had done more than could be expected from ordinary human beings. The mentality of non-violence and efforts to follow truth were much more evident to-day than fifteen years ago and it was not fair on the

part of Mr. Gandhi to leave them at this juncture, when the country needed him most. Since Mr. Gandhi had finally decided to retire, they had no option but to give him their blessings and record his services to the nation, which raised the status of India and Indians all over the world.

*Mr. Rajagopalachariar*, seconding Mr. Sidhwa's resolution, said that on this occasion it was difficult to find words. Mr. Gandhi's services were unique, but his exit from the Congress was more unique. The splendour of his services was no whit less to-day than it was when he was rendering those services. He said that he was one of those most stubborn persons who tried to keep Mr. Gandhi inside the Congress, but having failed, he had agreed to second the resolution. He did so in the hope that they would deserve his (Mr. Gandhi's) services by putting their House in order as he (Mr. Gandhi) wanted them.

*Mr. Purushottamdas Tandon*, supporting the resolution, said that Congressmen gave their blessing to Mr. Gandhi with a heavy heart but in the hope that his services and advice would be available to them, whenever, they needed them. Mr. Gandhi had given them a new weapon and strength to resist the British Empire. He was certain that everyone of them, even those who had differences with Mr. Gandhi would be longing for the day when he would once again return to the Congress to lead the country to victory.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

#### Next Congress Session

*Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant* moved a resolution inviting the next Congress to his province. He said that they were a small province and therefore such facilities and convenience as Bombay had provided could not be expected from them but they would do their utmost to make the session a success. He added that although they had not yet fixed a place in all probability it would be Lucknow. The resolution was carried unanimously.

#### Vote of Thanks

*Sardar Sardul Singh* moved a hearty vote of thanks to the Reception Committee for their splendid arrangements.

*Mr. Govindananda* seconded. The resolution was carried amidst cheers.

*Mr. Nariman*, replying on behalf of the Reception Committee, thanked the delegates and visitors and concluded with a tribute to Babu Rajendra Prasad's tact and ability in handling the most difficult and awkward situations during the deliberations of the Subjects Committee and the open session.

*Pandit Govinda Ballabh Pant*, in a lengthy speech, thanked Babu Rajendra Prasad for the able manner in which he had conducted the proceedings.

#### President's Closing Speech

*Babu Rajendra Prasad*, in his concluding speech, said that during the week in which the proceedings had lasted, he as well as the delegates were on their trial. He was certain that they had come out successful. As to how he had fared he left it to their judgment.

Referring to the magnificent reception accorded to him, he said that it was an honour not to him but to the Indian National Congress. They had proved beyond a shadow of doubt that the country was fully with the Congress and he was confident that they would ever strive to make it still stronger.

The President referred to the momentous resolutions adopted by them and appealed to them to put every word of those resolutions in action. You have to-day adopted a new constitution for the Congress. Go out into the country with that constitution and enlist hundreds of thousands of Congress members all over India. He also made a fervent appeal for support for every Congress candidate in the coming Assembly election. "You must return every Congress candidate to the Assembly. Go to the country and see that Congress prestige is maintained."

#### Conclusion of Proceedings

The proceedings concluded with the singing of *Vandemataram*, the entire audience standing.

# The Congress Nationalists' Conference

## NEW PARTY FORMED AT CALCUTTA

Calcutta—The 18th August 1934

The Conference convened by *Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya* to usher into existence a new Party to fight the Congress candidates in the forthcoming Assembly elections met under *Pandit Malaviya's* presidentship at the Ram Mohan Library Hall, Calcutta on the 18th. August 1934.

In his welcome address, *Acharya P. O. Ray*, President of the Reception Committee, hoped that the Nationalist Party Conference would be a party within the sheltering bosom of Indian National Congress.

### PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

In his presidential address, *Pandit Malaviya* dwelt on the evils of separate electorate and emphasised the objection to the Communal Award. Replying to a question from a delegate as to whether the Nationalist Party would be a party within the Congress, the President said that it was a difficult question to answer. If need be his party would work outside the Congress and might include in it men who did not entirely subscribe to the creed of the Party, which was identical with the object of the Congress.

Addressing the Conference, *Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya* said that nearly 50 years ago in December 1885, he had attended the second annual session of the Indian National Congress at the Calcutta Town Hall. During all these years, he had been a devoted and humble worker in the Congress cause. He had never been away from the Congress merely because he differed from any of the particular resolutions that were passed. He had always been of opinion that they should build up this one great national institution in such a manner that it could serve the object of a non-official Parliament of India. They had all contributed their humble share to build up this great institution. It could not be imagined, therefore, that he could do such a thing as would weaken the influence of the Congress and undermine its prestige. But it had now become necessary to uphold the very principles for which the Congress had stood for the last half a century. It had now become necessary to organise a Party in order that the Congress should attain its pristine glory and its former strength and serve the country on all the nationalistic lines that it had indicated. It was with this object that they had decided to form this party and they had convened this Conference.

The resolution of the Congress Working Committee on the question of the Communal Award was the cause of this discussion. When that resolution was framed, Mr. Aney and he had objected to certain portion of it. They had failed to convince their colleagues in the Working Committee of the force of their objections. About a month and a half passed in considering the matter as to whether it would be possible to come to an understanding. But they had again failed. He and Mr. Aney wanted that Congressmen should be allowed to vote on the Communal Award according to the mandate of their constituency. They suggested that freedom might be given to candidates who were elected on the Congress tickets to vote on the Communal Award in such a manner. But that was not done. Next they suggested that every one elected on the Congress ticket should be given freedom to vote according to his own conviction. These were the proposals that they had put forward before the Working Committee for their consideration. Were these proposals unreasonable, *Malaviyaji* asked? But these were not accepted. Of course, members of the Working Committee were good enough to allow him and Mr. Aney freedom to vote according to their own conviction. Members of the Working Committee said that others might also be given the same freedom if the Committee were satisfied that those people had a genuine grievance against the Communal Award. But they did not consider this proposal of the Committee to be fair because they felt that to put a ban on Congressmen not to speak against the Communal Award, when they felt very strongly against it, was wholly unfair.



### A VITAL QUESTION

"Believe me" continued Pandit Malaviya, "that Mr. Aney and myself spent many a day to see if there was any possibility of coming to an understanding before we finally decided to take this step. Having failed to persuade the Congress Working Committee to accept our views, we were faced with the question, "Here is the Communal Award. It is the decision of His Majesty's Government and it is argued that we failed to come to a solution and, therefore, the Government decision should now be accepted. But this is an entirely wrong proposition. The Government blamed us for not being able to arrive at any settlement with regard to the communal question. But I ask you to remember how much the Government contributed towards the failure of the settlement of the question that we arrived at on certain occasions. My complaint is not against the Muslim community. I know that some of them are satisfied with what has been given them under the Communal Award. But the bulk among them should realise in their mind that what they have been given is mere tinsel compared to gold to which they were entitled. They have been given separate electorates, a few more seats here and a few more seats there and a few appointments there. The Communal Award gives them separate seats, but does it give them any power? If the Communal Award is treated as merely an arrangement for the distribution of seats, it will be a great mistake. The Communal Award is the foundation on which the superstructure of the future constitution of India will be raised. The provisions of the Communal Award lay down the lines upon which the future constitution will be built. Narrowness, which is visible in the foundation, will be eloquently evident when the superstructure is raised. The question of the Communal Award is, therefore, a vital question."

Pandit Malaviya added that from the time when the Congress came into existence, it had worked for the establishment of a representative Government. From the year 1885, it had been urging the establishment of a representative institution and a representative institution required a joint electorate. He wanted Muslims to remember that the system of separate electorate had not come out of the Muslim brain. In 1908, under the inspiration and by the help of Government officials, separate electorates were introduced and to-day in the year of grace, 1934, again, it was being insisted upon. Separate electorates were extended in places where they were not wanted. The National Congress had not wanted separate electorate. It had been forced upon them. They wanted a representative Government, they wanted harmony, goodwill and mutual confidence among the people; they wanted a Government by the people, of the people and for the people. But if the people were divided by separate electorates, Muslims in one block and Hindus in another, what would be the result? The result would be mutual jealousy, distrust and quarrels. Authority after authority had condemned the system of separate electorates. Mr. Montagu, Lord Chelmsford and the Simon Commission spoke against it. Speaking on this subject, Mahatma Gandhi had said at the Round Table Conference, that the Congress will wander, no matter for how many years, in the wilderness, rather than lend itself to a proposal under which the hardy tree of freedom and responsible government can never grow. Having all this volume of opinion against separate electorates and in favour of joint electorates and particularly with the clear and weighty opinions of Mr. Montagu, Lord Chelmsford and of the Simon Commission, and of the repeated declaration by the Congress against the extension of the system of separate electorates, His Majesty's Government not only maintained this, but extended the principle of separate electorate in areas where it did not exist. Could any Nationalist, who looked at the question in the proper light, for a moment, think of accepting this state of things, the continuance of which, even for a day, meant further distrust and suspicion among different communities? He felt that every day the national stamina was being weakened and the result would be that the establishment of responsible Government would be prevented, it might be, for fifty years, due to the action of members of the British Parliament.

The first objection was that it had given Muslims more than they had asked for and had given them a wrong kind of thing. It gave them statutory majority with separate electorates. The Nehru Report stated that the "reservation of seats for a majority community gives to that community the statutory right to govern independently of the wishes of the electorate and is foreign to all conception of the popular government." In the Punjab, Mahomedans had been given 52 per cent



of representation. This meant that these people would be elected by votes of the Muslim electors and not a single Hindu would be entitled to vote for them. To whom would these people be responsible? Representatives, so elected, would be responsible to the Muslim electors and not to others. This would be a sort of responsible Government so far as Muslims were concerned, but would there be any responsible Government so far as the Hindus, Christians and others were concerned? No. At present they were living under one Government, of course a foreign Government, but what would they get by means of this communal electorate? Not a Government by the people, for the people and of the people but a Government of one community over another. In the Punjab, it would be a Government by Muslims of Hindus and in the U. P., it would be a Government by Hindus of Muslims. Did any patriotic Indian desire that anyone of his countrymen of whatever caste, creed or colour, should be placed under such conditions? It would not be democracy. It would be a special kind of despotic Government. It would be tyranny of one community over another and it was this despotism which the Communal Award sought to instal. His Majesty's Government, therefore, thrust on the country what was strongly opposed by Mr. Montagu, Lord Chelmsford, the Simon Commission and by a large body of public opinion in India.

In 1931, the Nationalist Muslims in India carried on a great campaign throughout the country in favour of joint electorate and against separate electorate. Bengal took the lead. The Bengal Legislative Council passed a resolution protesting against the Communal electorate and favouring joint electorate. In July 1931, the Congress Working Committee framed a scheme of joint electorate for the whole country. The proposition was that there should be joint electorate in all provinces with reservation of seats for minorities, if they so desired, according to their proportion in population.

"Now if you allow the provisions of the Communal Award to stand, what will be the result?" asked the Pandit. "Self-Government will not grow. It cannot grow under these conditions and the domination of Britain over India will be extended for an indefinite length of time, is that what you desire? Now, what are we to do in the situation? If the Congress Working Committee rejected the Communal Award it would not mean that it demolished separate electorate or that it would bring about electorate for all provinces, but it would have shown to the Government and to those Muslims who were satisfied with the Communal Award that Nationalists, as a whole, were strongly opposed to it. If that feeling was created, that would be an assurance that separate electorate would go sooner or later. Besides, those, who had been affected by the Communal Award, would have the satisfaction that when the Government had done them a wrong, the Congress took up their cause and tried to remedy their grievance. That would be a great solace to those whose cause had been injured by this Communal Award. Refusal on the part of the Working Committee to express any opinion on it amounts to tacit acceptance of the Communal Award. When you say you cannot reject or accept the Communal Award, you are departing from the principle of the Congress.

#### DUTY BEFORE NATIONALISTS

"I ask you what is your duty at the present moment. If you leave the matter as it is, you imperil national interests. We have tried to persuade the Working Committee and we have failed. If we feel convinced in our hearts that the view which has been urged is correct in the interest of the nation as a whole and in the interest of Hindus and Sikhs in particular, we should not keep silent but we should organise the expression of that opinion. We should make every effort to give utterance to the feeling which is surging in the hearts of the people all over the country. That is the object of the Nationalist Party. It has been said that this will weaken the strength of the Congress. It will not. It will replace the Congress in its former position of glory. Are we so senseless that, at this juncture when we are to fight the great Government, we shall unnecessarily quarrel among ourselves and weaken the strength and the prestige of the Congress? If the Congress has gone wrong, it becomes our duty to bring it to its right position, so that it may establish once again its former glory. The Nationalist Party has made it clear in its manifesto that the object of the party is the same as the object of the Indian National Congress, namely, the attainment of "purna swaraj" (complete independence) by all legitimate and peaceful means. Anybody who accepts that position becomes a member of this Party.

Anybody who does not accept the position does not become a member of the Party. The general rule is almost without exception that anybody who wishes to join the Nationalist Party must subscribe to the object of the Indian National Congress. We have made it clear that our difference with the Congress lies only with regard to its attitude towards the Communal Award. I am not standing here for those who may have any hesitation to say that their object is complete independence. We are entitled to complete independence as much as Englishmen are entitled to complete independence in their own land.

"Our country is great, ever great with its glorious past. Why should it be inferior to any other country on earth in respect of its status? This country of ours should have nothing less than self-government, than complete independence. And since we want it, we want that the Congress should work on the principles as it has done in the past and not allow its mind to be swayed by anything less than what nationalism demands".

### Discussion on Resolutions

A few well-dressed young men created trouble by seeking to get forcible entry into the Conference Hall before the Nationalist Conference resumed sittings this evening. They broke the panes of the windows and tried to rush in, but were promptly arrested by the police and marched away.

*Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya*, presiding, read out *Dr. Rabindranath Tagore's* message condemning the Communal Award and appealing to Hindus and Musalmans to fight the Award.

"You all know I have always disapproved the Communal Award and I hope our leaders will join their forces to save from its paralysing grip the political integrity of the Nation.

"I address this letter to Moslems as well as Hindus with the most sincere desire for the good of all sections of the community. I urge that Hindus and Moslems should sit together dispassionately to consider the Communal Award and its implications and arrive at an agreed solution of the communal problem. It is needless to point out that self-government cannot be based on a communal division and separate electorate. No responsible system of Government can be possible without the mutual understanding of our communities and united representation at the legislatures. We must concentrate all our forces to evolve better understanding and co-operation between the different sections of our people and then by a solid foundation for the social and political reconstruction of our motherland. I deprecate all expressions of angry feelings and most strongly appeal to Hindus and Moslems to avoid saying or doing anything that may increase the communal tension and further postpone understanding between our communities without which there can be no peaceful progress in our country."

### MEMBERSHIP OF PARTY

*Mr. Akhil Chandra Dutta* then moved the following resolution :—

"Resolved that a party to be called the Congress Nationalist Party be constituted with the object of carrying on agitation against the Communal Award and the White Paper, both in the legislature and outside and of setting up candidates for election to the legislatures for the promotion of that object.

"Resolved that every Congressman who subscribes to the object of the party as defined above, shall be eligible as a member of the Party. Candidates for election to the legislature shall be elected from among Congressmen who are members of the Party. In special cases, the Party may support a Nationalist as a candidate for election to the legislature, who subscribes to the object of the Party and agrees to abide by its rules in the legislature."

The mover justified the formation of the new Party and declared that the Working Committee's resolution left them no alternative.

*Mr. Jamnadas Mehta*, when rising to second the motion, was heckled by a delegate, who asked who was a Nationalist?

*Mr. Mehta* : One who stands for the nation.

*Delegate* : Do you mean to say that those who were against us in the thick of the fight will be selected by you?

*Mr. Mehta* : No, not necessarily, but you cannot claim that any single body of men can alone claim the monopoly of patriotism.

Continuing, Mr. *Jamnadas Mehta* analysed the principle of the White Paper and declared that Princes were going to rule them without their being ruled by us in return. After referring to the various divisions and subdivisions sought to be imposed by the White Paper, Mr. Mehta observed that the White Paper gave them no financial responsibility. He condemned the recent communal G. O. and characterised it as Government's election manifesto, further to divide the people and ask them to walk into the Government parlour. He could not see what was in the White Paper for them to quarrel amongst themselves. The Army would be reserved. Commerce has been safeguarded and finance would be a department without real power. Mr. Mehta then adverted to the special responsibilities vested in Governors and the Governor-General and declared that real power would continue to vest in a small bureaucracy. Recently during his visit to England a Peer had asked him seven times and seven times had he replied to the Peer that India would not have anything to do with the White Paper. How can they infuse life into a corpse?

Mr. *Santosh Kumar Basu*, ex-Mayor, put a few questions to the President. He asked Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney if it was necessary to start a new party for the mere purpose of opposing the Communal Award, especially after Gandhiji's recent pronouncement in favour of allowing a conscience clause. He further questioned the wisdom of the third clause in the resolution which permitted non-Congressmen to come in. There was hardly any prestige left for the Congress and were they going to let what little existed to tumble down? (Cheers and cries of hear, hear). Mr. Basu was not accusing non-Congressmen, but what right had the party to ask the electorate to return non-Congressmen? He put these questions in a spirit of humility and not of opposition.

Pandit Malaviya answered the two points raised. Dealing with the first question, the President recalled his and Mr. Aney's attempts to come to some understanding with Mahatma Gandhi on this point and said that the Working Committee had left it to the Parliamentary Board to exempt those who claimed conscientious objection. He was glad that Gandhiji had now expressed himself in favour of freedom of vote over the question of the Communal Award. The President then called on Mr. N. C. Kelkar to explain the position.

Mr. N. C. Kelkar said he had sent a telegram to Gandhiji asking him to avoid a catastrophic conflict on the issue of the Award among Congressmen. Gandhiji replied that freedom of opinion was offered but rejected. Gandhiji, therefore, asked Mr. Kelkar to induce Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney to reconsider the matter and accept his position. Mr. Kelkar added that freedom of opinion was originally intended to apply only to two people. He thereupon asked Gandhiji why that freedom should not apply to others, who claimed conscientious objection? Gandhiji's views meant only this, that still the Congress Parliamentary Board would have the right of rejecting the applications of anti-Communal Award people to stand as Congress candidates for the elections. Mr. Kelkar was clear in his own mind that freedom of voting was not intended by Gandhiji for more than half a dozen people. Mr. Kelkar said that Mr. Aney wanted to be more qualified to speak.

Mr. M. S. Aney referred to the Working Committee's discussions and recalled the discussions there on the question of this conscience clause. Mr. Aney pressed the Working Committee to realise that the position taken by it was a virtual repudiation of the Congress position and sought to prevent others from expressing their opinion. So Mr. Aney and Pandit Malaviya told Gandhiji and his colleagues that there was no use of their (Mr. Aney and others of his views) staying with the Congress Board, unless all those returned on the Congress ticket were given freedom of the vote. This would not be accepted by the Committee, which was unwilling to extend the freedom to more than half a dozen people. Mr. Aney declared that Pandit and he could not accept this limited concession.

A delegate asked what would become of the Party if the Congress reversed its resolution.

Pandit Malaviya said that the question was that having regard to the country's position over the Communal Award, it was not right to stifle expression of opinion. Malaviyaji added that it would be a bad day for the country, when it questioned, the right of free expression of opinion. A compromise having failed, what was their duty? They must speak out their minds. That was how he and his colleagues interpreted their duty. Malaviyaji assured the delegates that his personal relations with Gandhiji remained and would continue to remain cordial. He asked the Conference to realise that any vote of the Assembly would be interpreted by

the civilised world as the opinion of India. That was why he pleaded with them to see that freedom of opinion was not stifled. The Communal Award sought to divide them and they must oppose it tooth and nail. It had been said that their cause would suffer if they had no solid majority. Panditji said it would be a shock to him if the Congress should support the Working Committee's decision. Unless Gandhiji made a personal appeal, Pandit Malaviya was confident that the Congress would reverse the Committee's decision. Answering Mr. Basu's second point, Malaviyaji declared that if Dr. Ansari had the right of starting a party at Ranchi without consulting the Congress, he hoped that others had freedom to start a better organisation. He added that a change in the name of the party brought it nearer the Congress.

Referring to his attempts to set up common candidates, Panditji still hoped that it would be possible to have common candidates returned unopposed. The only difference between the Congress and themselves was in respect of the Communal Award. Regarding the proposed inclusion of non-Congress Nationalists, Panditji said that during his discussions with Gandhiji, before his resignation, he had urged the necessity for inclusion of non-Congress Nationalists. Gandhiji had agreed. Pandit Malaviya asked how they could afford to ignore businessmen, who for reasons of commerce, could not subscribe to the Congress creed, although they were in sympathy with it. Panditji assured the Conference that while he would invite Zamindars and businessmen to join the Conference, it would not be right to shut them out, because they could not so join. He had sufficient faith in Congressmen to believe that they could still put up an agreed list of candidates. If the Congress would not alter the Working Committee's resolution, what would be their position? Panditji said that that was a hypothetical question, but it involved loyalty to the Congress. At the same time they should not forget that the Congress was only an instrument of service. "Motherland first, Motherland next, Motherland last" was Panditji's motto. (Cheers).

The resolution was put and passed only three dissenting.

At Pandit Malaviya's instance, the Conference voted an Election Board with himself as President, Acharya P. C. Roy as Vice-President, Mr. Aney as Secretary and a selection board for selecting candidates to the Legislative Assembly.

#### WHITE PAPER

Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu then moved: "This Conference considers that the proposal for constitutional reforms contained in the White Paper is wholly unsatisfactory and reactionary, and the Conference is thoroughly opposed to the scheme as a whole".

Mr. Basu declared that it was a tragedy that the very scheme which was supposed to satisfy Indian aspiration had for its underlying feature the wholesale and unalloyed distrust of the Indian people. As he had no doubt in his mind the whole scheme was overshadowed by the principle that Indians should, in no event, be trusted with even a modicum of power. He declared that no respectable country would care to have a scheme such as the White Paper which Britain tried to force down on India.

Mr. D. V. Gokhale, editor of "The Mahratta" seconding the motion, declared that the White Paper proposals were a direct negation of the much talked of principle of self-determination. Indians had no hand in its framing. Sir Samuel Hoare's was the only hand visible in its being brought forth into the world. No one in this country would have anything to do with the White Paper, while it sought to make children of the soil aliens in their own country. The resolution was unanimously passed.

#### COMMUNAL AWARD

Mr. P. N. Banerjea then moved the next resolution on the Communal Award which ran as follows:—

"The Conference records its strong disapproval of the Government's decision on the communal problem which has been wrongly called the Communal Award, as it retains and extends the evil of separate, communal, class electorates, provides statutory majorities with separate electorates which are fatal to the development of representation upon a National basis, on which alone a system of responsible Government can possibly take root".



Mr. Banerjea recalled the story of the Communal Award and declared that no one agreed to refer the communal question to the arbitration of the British Premier. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, as though with a view to perpetuate the communal distinctions in political matters, sought to introduce factors which even rabid communists on either side had not dared to hope for. He appealed to the Conference to oppose the Award tooth and nail.

Mr. *Abdus Samad*, seconding the resolution, made a fighting speech. He characterised the Congress Working Committee's resolution on the subject as "sounding the death-knell of Indian nationalism". He declared that the position taken up by the Working Committee, if accepted by the people, would make the realisation of communal unity almost an impossibility. He was an enemy of communal representation in any shape or form, because it was not only anti-national but it was also inconsistent with responsible Government. It was true that Mussalmans had gone to legislatures, on a purely communal ticket, but had they gained anything thereby? If communal bickerings and misunderstandings were something of which they could be proud, these were alone the products of the principle of separate electorates. The speaker was convinced that if the existence of separate electorates on a communal basis was tolerated, in any future constitution, it would usher in an era of fratricidal war to escape from which would be well nigh an impossibility. "We want to live in peace", said Mr. *Abdus Samad* "and not to quarrel over a shadow".

Mr. *N. C. Kelkar* whole-heartedly associated himself with the resolution and declared that the Communal Award, alone, in the field of political documents, was without a parallel. The virus of communalism which it sought to introduce should be immediately cut out. Otherwise, the growth of a nation would be impeded on a permanent scale.

*Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjea* declared that the Communal Award went against the principle laid down by the League of Nations. The minorities in Bengal and the Punjab did not want any separate representation. They wanted no protection of their interests. Yet the British Premier gave them this Award. The speaker believed that no self-respecting Indian could afford to tolerate the Award, which sought to devitalise what little nationalism existed in this country.

Mr. *Lalchand Navalrai* and *Kumar Ganganand Sinha* characterised the Communal Award as anti-national and opposed to the best and lasting interests of the country. The resolution was passed.

Mr. *Jogendra Chandra Chakravarty*, proposing a vote of thanks to the chair, paid a tribute to Pandit Malaviya and said that he had given a correct lead to the nation in this moment of crisis. Mr. Chakravarti, however, emphasised the need for coming to some kind of understanding with Mahatma Gandhi.

#### LEGISLATIVE INTERFERENCE IN RELIGION

*Pandit Malaviya* received an ovation when he rose to make his concluding remarks. The Pandit declared that nothing pained him more than to feel compelled to form this new party. He had done his best to avoid it but he could not help it. But he would assure his friends that in forming the Party, he was not actuated by any desire to promote the interests of one community at the cost of another. He and those holding the same views as himself, were actuated by a sense of duty to the country and to its people—Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians, Parsis and Sikhs alike. Panditji declared that it was a failing of the Hindu character that even when they knew that disaster was threatening them, they would not stand up and fight, because they would thereby possibly wound the feelings of others. Quoting from the Gita, he asked the Conference to fight for a righteous cause.

Referring to the question of legislative interference in religious and social and political matters, Pandit Malaviya declared that personally he was opposed to such interference as it was calculated to lead to all kinds of complications. He was the recipient of many letters and representations on the subject asking him to drop this item from the Party's programme. He declared that this question was fully discussed by the Subjects Committee but they were unable to arrive at a decision over the matter. They had, therefore, decided to defer their decision for the present.

Pandit Malaviya congratulated the Conference on its businesslike proceedings. He said that nothing would give him greater pleasure than to come to an understanding with Mahatma Gandhi and the Working Committee. He still ventured



to hope that they would yet find it possible to run common candidates. The Conference was then dissolved.

## CONGRESS NATIONALISTS AND THE REFORMS SCHEME

The Congress Nationalist leaders, after three days' deliberations held at Benares on the 26th. to 28th. December 1934 adopted the following resolutions :—

The Working Committee of the Congress Nationalist Party consider the J. P. C. Report as wholly unsatisfactory and unacceptable. The recommendations of the J. P. C. do not transfer real power from the hands of the British Government, to those of the people of this country, either at the Centre or in the Provinces but by investing the Governor-General and Governors with dictatorial powers in special responsibilities and discretionary powers reduce Cabinets and legislatures to a state of helplessness and thereby render the whole scheme a mockery of representative government. The recommendations are obviously designed to perpetuate foreign domination and facilitate economic exploitation of the country by providing a number of reservations, restraints and safeguards. The scheme of representation is based on an anti-national communal decision, which, by its spirit of communalism, will not merely hinder the growth of nationalism but render altogether impossible all healthy progress towards the goal of Purna Swaraj, within a measurable distance of time. The Working Committee is clearly of the opinion that it would be better for the country to continue, if necessary, for some time longer under the existing constitution, highly defective though it is, than accept the constitution recommended by the Joint Parliamentary Committee.

The Working Committee of the Congress Nationalist Party regrets that, in utter disregard of the great volume of public opinion existing in the country among Hindus, Sikhs, Indian Christians, Nationalist Muslims and others, the Joint Parliamentary Committee endorsed the communal decision of His Majesty's Government.

The Working Committee is firmly of the opinion that the system of representation based on separate electorates which the so-called Communal Award has recommended is glaringly unjust particularly to Hindus, is anti-national and constitutes an insuperable obstacle to the establishment of popular self-government and can, therefore, never be acceptable to the people of this country.

The Working Committee strongly controverts the opinion of the Joint Parliamentary Committee that in the existing circumstances of the country, communal representation must be accepted as inevitable. The statement of the Joint Parliamentary Committee "that there is among almost all the communities in India (not excepting the Hindus) a very considerable degree of acquiescence in the Award "is erroneous and misleading" and that the observation of the Joint Parliamentary Committee "that if any attempt is now made to alter or modify it (the Award) the consequence would be disastrous" is incorrect and manifestly unfair.

In view of the vital importance of the question and of the fact that the Joint Parliamentary Committee has taken such a mistaken view of public opinion in India in regard to the Communal Award, the Working Committee appeals to the people to carry on a ceaseless campaign against the Award until it is replaced by a scheme based on a joint electorate on the lines recommended by the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress in 1931.

The Working Committee appeals to the people to hold public meetings all over the country on January 27, 1935, and give united public expression to their feelings of opposition and resentment in relation to the Communal Award.

Resolved that an All-India Anti-Communal Award Conference be held at Delhi, on February 16 and 17, 1935 of representatives from every part of the country to voice the country's opinion against the Communal Award.

The Working Committee of the Congress Nationalist Party invites all sections of the people to unite in opposing proposals contained in the Government of India Bill now before Parliament and in taking steps to prepare a scheme of national self-government which will be acceptable to all communities in India and will best serve and protect the interests of the country.

# The National Liberal Federation

Opening Day—Poona—28th. December 1934

The Sixteenth Session of the National Liberal Federation of India assembled at the Gokhale Hall, Poona on the 28th. December 1934. A large number of distinguished visitors attended the opening session and all notable Liberal leaders, besides many leaders throughout India were present. The Reception Committee consisting of 200 members had made excellent arrangements for the conduct of the session. The total number of delegates attending the session was nearly 400.

The President-elect, *Pandit Hirdayanath Kunzru*, was accorded a warm reception at the entrance to the Gokhale Hall and led to the platform.

The programme opened with prayer and welcome songs by students of Gandharva Maha Vidyalaya. Then *Rao Bahadur R. R. Kale*, Chairman of the Reception Committee, delivered the welcome address.

The formal election of the President was then proceeded with. Proposing *Pandit Hirdayanath Kunzru* to the Chair, *Sir Chimanlal* said that it was just 45 years ago, in 1889, that he attended the National Congress first and that an impressive speech was delivered there by Pandit Kunzru's late lamented father. A worthy son of a worthy father, Pandit Hirdayanath was giving his best to the Servants of India Society. He had given himself to the cause of the country.

Mr. *Jatindranath Basu*, retiring President of the Liberal Federation, seconding, said that Pandit Kunzru, though comparatively young, was thoroughly experienced in public life and when important changes were coming, it was good they were having a young man to guide their deliberations.

Mr. *T. R. Venkatarama Sastri* said that this session of the Federation was a momentous one, for they had to decide whether they were going to accept a new constitution which they did not know where it would lead them to or they were going to be content with the old constitution itself. Mr. Venkatarama Sastri further said that Pandit Hirdayanath Kunzru was both young and old and this was his 25th year of his membership of the Servants of India Society.

Mr. *C. Y. Chintamani* said that Pandit Kunzru, son of Pandit Ayodhyanath Kunzru, a student under Mr. Gokhale and a colleague of the Rt. Hon. Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, had made his mark for thoroughness of work and his grasp of principles and fundamentals was very great. He had evinced great interest in the cause of Overseas Indians and had been connected with so many public organisations for the benefit of the people that he was eminently fit to preside over the day's session. Mr. Chintamani added: "Every waking hour of his life is dedicated to the cause of the country." His work in the United Provinces at the helm of the Harijan Sevak Sangha was well known. Pandit Kunzru's moderation was animated moderation. To Pandit Kunzru "moderation is not weakness; violence is not strength and vulgarity is not independence."

## Mr. Kale's Welcome Address

In the course of his welcome address, *Rao Bahadur R. R. Kale*, Chairman of the Reception Committee, criticised the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report and observed:

Since the Committee have taken the survey contained in the Statutory Commission as the starting point and the text book of their investigation, it is no wonder their recommendations are vitiated in as much as the Simon Commission had been boycotted even by such moderate element as the Liberals and therefore suffered from the fatal infirmity of having to deal with practically exparte evidence in the absence of statements and views of non-communal recognised political organisations and national leaders of Indian people and thus lacking in that disinterested and impartial material. The Committee has laid too much stress on the age-old antagonism between the Hindu and Mahomedan communities with numerous exclusive minorities with rigid divisions of caste and therefore it says communal representa-

tion must be accepted. Mr. Kale proceeded to show by quoting from the history of the Marathas by the late Justice Ranade that during the period immediately preceeding the British conquest, there had been achieved a liberalisation in the religious thoughts of the people and the spirit of tolerance engendered with the result that the communities were acting in a friendly spirit towards each other owing to the advent of the protestant movements inaugurated by Saints and Prophets, both Hindu and Mahomedan—a movement which bore a curious parallel to the history of the Reform movement which had sprung upon Western Europe at the same time. There was a tendency towards the reconciliation of the two races in mutual recognition of the essential unity of Rama and Rahiman in the 17th and 18th centuries. After the advent of the British Rule the labours of men like Raja Ram Mohon Roy of Bengal and Mr. Justice Ranade of Bombay largely contributed to the social and religious amelioration of the people and these were continued by workers like the late Dr. Mrs. Annie Besant and Mr. Gokhale.

#### COMMUNAL AWARD

Mr. Kale then dealt with the genesis of the communal problem and quoting from the note to appendix V of the Simon Commission Report, showed how the separate representation of Mahomedans in the Councils of the Morley-Minto Reforms was not intended as a step in the direction of establishment of Parliamentary Government of India, how the Lucknow Pact should not and cannot be quoted as justification of the continuance of separate electorates, which have been condemned as vicious and unsound from time to time in various documents, both official and non-official, nor was it correct to say that India itself had deliberately chosen this road to responsible government, for it was the British authorities who were primarily responsible for pointing out this wrong road in 1909. This last remark, he added, might well be applied to the so-called Communal Award of 1933. He asked if the British Government are said to be trustees looking to the welfare of the people of India, is it not their plain duty not to do anything which is wrong in principle and opposed to all canons of responsible Government? Are they not committing a breach of their trust by continuing the vicious system when experience has shown that separate electorates since their introduction have tended to emphasise the differences and increase the tension between the communities? Is it not a commentary on their professions that they are leading us on the right path of self-government? The defect of communal representation in the constitution affects the fundamental and basic principle in any constitutional advance towards full responsible Government." He regretted that no constituent powers had been given to the Legislatures of India for removing this and other defects nor any time limit put on this. He challenged the statement made in the Report that "there is among almost all the communities in India (not excepting the Hindus) a very considerable degree of acquiescence in the Award." Mr. Kale asked if the communal decision was not a strange commentary on the professions made by the British authorities that they are leading us on the path to real self-government, while perpetuating conditions antagonistic to it.

Much is made of the differences amongst us and want of agreement is put forward as an excuse for refusing even moderate demands, added Mr. Kale. Assurances were given that the agreement reached at the R. T. C. will be the basis of the Legislative proposals. When however efforts were made by the Indian delegation associated with the J. P. C. to crystalise Indian moderate public opinion and as a result a joint memorandum was submitted by persons representing all communities and interests and embodying moderate demands, the report has not accepted any of their suggestions.

The speaker next dealt with some observations made in the Report that the Indian soil is not suited to a responsible form of Government, that there has been no seed sown in it which could be developed. He pointed out to the existence of village councils and village institutions like the Panchayats even during the time of the Peshwas, the immediate predecessors of the British Government, which contained in them amazing potentiality for Swaraj: and in the Maratha confederacy, which was replaced by British Rule, there was the seed of a federated India.

Mr. Kale explained the Liberal creed and showed how it represented the centre party in the country, the party of reform as distinguished from reactionary and revolutionary bodies. He passed on to show how the Government had not done anything to enhance its influence and how it had encouraged communalism and thus retarded the progress of broad, sound principles among the people.

Alluding to communistic tendencies in the country, the speaker said that the seed of Communism ought not to be allowed to be sown in this country. No encouragement should be given to political agitation intended to exploit the misery and distress of the people who must be prevented from falling a prey to Communistic ideas by concerting measures for relieving the oppressed and distressed and improving their economic condition.

He also referred to the need for intensive propaganda by the Liberal party of their principles to awaken the people to a sense of their duties as citizens.

### J. P. C. REPORT

In conclusion, Mr. Kale referred to some of the subjects dealt with in the J. P. C. Report and remarked that Dominion Status ought to find a place in the New Constitution Act, having regard to the declarations made by the Viceroy and the Prime Minister of England. Finance, he said, is the key to the working of the whole machinery of Government. But in the proposals of the Joint Parliamentary Committee there is nothing about the regulation of the military expenditure, nothing about the nationalisation of the Army within a definite and fixed period, nothing about reduction of strength of British troops; then again, nothing is to be found about the revision of the salaries of the Civil Servants. No reform of finance, he continued, is likely to be of any benefit to the taxpayer which does not start from a thorough overhauling from the top of the scale and establishment of the Civil and Military Departments of the Government in India. It is time we realise the futility of liberalising and refining our Constitution as long as official opinion refuses to evolve.

Mr. Kale also referred to the fiscal and economic aspect of the proposals and showed how the Indian legislature will have in the future no opportunity or right of judging the question of English trade preference on its merits. Further, he complained that there was no scope for India to adopt most effective methods of national, economic regeneration adopted at present by other countries. In this state of things, the only remedy left open to us, he said, is to make efforts to encourage our own industries by buying our home-made articles even at some sacrifice. Mr. Kale was disappointed to find no constituent powers given to our legislature and the procedure suggested even for small amendments is far too cumbersome and unsatisfactory. Mr. Kale concluded by quoting from the Upanishads two verses advising people to awake, arise, approach and take advice of the worthy and work and labour together and not hate one another.

### Pt. Kunzru's Presidential Address

In his address, the President *Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru* dealt at length with the declarations of his Majesty's Government and of their responsible Ministers and representatives regarding the goal of Indian policy and showed that goal was till lately definitely envisaged as Dominion Status. Unfortunately, however, that goal had receded into the background and significantly enough, there was no reference at all in it to Dominion Status as the goal. Proceeding, the President discussed in detail, the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee. He said:

### JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

"In considering the constitutional proposals, I shall devote myself largely to an examination of the new features introduced into the White Paper by the Committee. The outlines of the constitution adumbrated in the White Paper are well-known. Responsibility at the centre will be conceded only if an All-India Federation embracing the States is established. The States will be entitled to one-third of the seats in the Federal Assembly and forty per cent of the seats in the Federal Council of States and their representatives will be nominated by the princes. The British Indian representatives in the Federal Assembly will be returned to include in the ministry representatives of Indian States and the minorities. The lower house will not be supreme even in financial matters. The upper house, whose size relatively to the Assembly, will be much larger than that recommended by the Indian Franchise Committee, will have equal authority in respect of financial legislation and will have the power, on the initiative of the legislature, and, in view of the financial powers of the upper house, it is needless to add that even this nomi-



nal responsibility will not be owed exclusively to the popular house, if one may dare call the Federal Assembly by that name. Neither the executive nor the legislature under this system will be prone to indulge in rash innovation or undue self-assertion : but to guard against all possible dangers the Governor-General will be armed with extensive powers, to overrule both. He will have the ultimate authority in all matters relating to law and order and he will virtually guide financial and commercial policy though finance and commerce are transferred subjects. The administration of railways will be practically under his control, and special measures intended to develop Indian trade and commerce may be vetoed by him on the ground that they appear to discriminate against Britishers. To assist him in the exercise of his financial authority, he will have at his elbow, in addition to the I. C. S. Financial Secretary, a financial adviser who will be independent of the ministry, and who like the British advisers of the Egyptian Government may draw all real power in his hands. With necessary modifications, the election of legislatures and the formation of ministries in the provinces will take place in accordance with the system at the centre. Three provinces are to enjoy the privilege of having second chambers which will be formed on a communal basis and elected on a high property franchise, so that they may be specially qualified to champion the interests of the masses. The Governor, as far as practicable, will have powers similar to those given to the Governor-General except in respect of finance, and will be specially responsible for the internal administration and discipline of the police. The Indian Civil and Police Services, the iron frame on which Governors-General and Governors may always lean for support, will remain, as at present, under the control of the Secretary of States and Britishers will continue to be recruited to them in existing proportions. Even orders relating to the transfer and posting of officers, belonging to them will, as now, require the personal concurrence of the Governor. The system of recruitment to both these services will be enquired into five years after the commencement of the Constitution Act, and action on the results of this enquiry will be subject to the approval of both Houses of Parliament.

A cabinet minister recently said that the new machinery of government contained every safeguard that the wit of man can devise. How true this is, is shown by the brief description which has just been given of the White Paper scheme. It is admirably devised to encourage inaction and prevent change. Whatever the intentions of authors may have been, it embodies a static conception of society and indicates fear of the unknown future.

Not satisfied with the formidable barriers opposed by these arrangements to the growth of nationalism and the advance of democracy or the development of a spirit of independence in ministers and legislators, the Committee makes suggestions which will destroy the national character of the Federal Assembly, curtail its powers, further strengthen the forces of privilege and conservatism ; humiliate the provincial ministers and make the Governor the virtual dictator of his province.

With regard to the central constitution, the Committee recommends indirect election to the British India section of the Federal Assembly, the election of the Council of State by provincial upper chambers or bodies analogous to them, a novel method which has been rightly described as fantastic by Lord Salisbury and the elevation of the Council of State to a position of equality with the Assembly in the matter of the voting of demands. The Council of State will not be subject to dissolution. Its members will be elected for nine years but only one-third of them will retire at a time.

In the provincial domain, while making it clear that it should not "be understood as reporting against the introduction of the system of indirect election in the future" for the popular house, it agrees to direct election but recommends the establishment of second chambers in the Madras and Bombay presidencies. Besides, it makes three proposals for increasing the already enormous powers of the Governor and giving him additional control over the maintenance of law and order. Any alteration of the Police Act and such of the regulations made under it as "in his opinion relate to or affect the organisation or discipline of the police" should require the previous sanction of the Governor. The records of the provincial Intelligence Department should not be shown to any officer, not even the Home member of the Government, outside the police force without the permission of the Governor. It is instructive to note here that it has been proposed that the Central Intelligence Bureau, which is now under the Home Department, should be attached to one of the Governor-General's Reserved Departments.



Even without assuming control of the entire government, the Governor may in order to cope with crimes of violence, the object of which is to overthrow Government, take charge of such departments as he thinks necessary and appoint an official to be his mouthpiece in the Legislature. In the case of Bengal, it has been recommended that, unless the situation improves before the introduction of provincial autonomy, the Governor should be directed in his Instrument of Instructions, to exercise immediately the powers referred to above. The Committee further contemplates that, in the event of a breakdown of the constitutional machinery, the Governor should have the power even to suspend the legislature and administer the province without it.

In addition to this, the convention which conceded fiscal freedom to India in principle in accordance with the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee on the Government of India Bill, 1919, has been virtually abrogated. The Governor-General is to be empowered by statute to prevent imports from England from being treated in a manner which he may regard as discriminatory.

As regards the Indian Civil and Police Services, which will be the guardians of British power in this country, the obligations to institute and enquire into the system of recruitment to them five years after the inauguration of the new constitution has been done away with, and as regards the Army, the Committee makes the startling observation, that "the problem of Indianisation does not appear to us to be essentially related to the constitutional issues with which we are concerned."

#### CENTRAL LEGISLATURE

Of the retrograde recommendations made by the Committee the proposal for the election of the representatives of British India to the Federal Assembly by the provincial lower house is easily the most retrograde. The abandonment of direct election was recommended by the Simon Commission. The Government of India, however, after a full examination of the matter, arrived at a conclusion unfavourable to this proposal. They were so impressed by the disadvantages of indirect election, confusion of electoral issues, danger of corruption, etc. that they wrote to the Secretary of State in their despatch on the Simon Commission's report, "On the sum of these considerations, we would ourselves incline to the conclusion that a method whereby the Assembly would be wholly or mainly constituted by indirect election would not be suitable. The certain objections do not seem to us to outweigh the possible disadvantages". They dissented from the Commission's view that if the centre was to develop on Federal lines the representation of the provinces as such in the Federal Assembly was almost necessary for the participation of the States and held that "even if the States did enter Assembly, it does not appear to us to be necessary that the method of representation of the States and the provinces of British India must be uniform". While admitting the disadvantages arising from the unwieldy size of the constituencies and pointing out that direct election had not yielded all that was expected of it, they still believed that "the balance of the argument is in favour of the maintenance of direct election" and added that "in any case we feel that the method of election is essentially a matter on which the considered judgment of Indian opinion should have great weight".

When the matter was considered by the Round Table Conference, the delegates from British India were unanimous in desiring the retention of the system of direct election. The Lothian Committee, after examining all possible bases for the revision of the franchise, endorsed the Indian view and the White Paper retained direct election for the Federal Assembly.

The Committee has, however, taken a different view, and decided, contrary to experience, the weight of authority and the wishes of Indians to reverse the system of election which has been in force since 1920. Broadly speaking, it will be true to say that we owe this to the Conservative Members of the Committee. The objections to a system of direct election have been considered over and over again during the last four years. Full weight has been given to them at every investigation, but as the Committee itself says, the system "has worked on the whole reasonably well." And for the present at least, the increase in the strength of the Federal Assembly will make the constituencies more manageable and contact between the candidates and the voters easier. Future difficulties may well be left to be dealt with by Indian ministers themselves. If the problems created by size and numbers have been solved by Australia and the United States, there is no reason to suppose that they will prove insoluble in India.

In any case, the disadvantages of indirect election are at present graver than those of direct election, and indirect election to the lower house is without a parallel in existing federal constitutions. In view of the shifting composition of the provincial legislature, the members elected by them in practice will not be accountable for their conduct to anybody. In the best of circumstances, they will owe less responsibility to their electors than what the members elected under the present system owe to theirs.

Besides if a party captures the provincial councils, it will automatically control the election of the provincial representatives to the Federal Assembly. Again, the fear of corruption under the system recommended by the Committee cannot be regarded as imaginary. As eight or nine votes may suffice for securing election to the Assembly, there will be a strong temptation to improper methods. It is stated in a recently published book that, in the old days when the Senate of the United States of America were elected by the State legislatures and corruption, open and organised, was consequently rife, a member of this august body, on a roll-call answered "not guilty". The ludicrous incident contains a warning which it will be perilous for us to ignore.

The gravest objection to the proposal of the Committee is that, if it is adopted, the Assembly will cease to be symbol of national unity or a force making for the consolidation of national strength. If the Assembly becomes the representative of provincial interests, the country will be morally split up into isolated parts and there will be no organ for the expression of the national will. Besides, it is our experience that in matters concerning our political status, the views of the elected Assembly alone have counted for anything. For instance, when one or two provincial councils declined to co-operate with the Simon Commission, their action scarcely created a ripple either in India or England. Its effect was purely local. But when the Assembly adopted the same course, the blow it struck for the self-respect of the nation resounded throughout the country and Great Britain. It is because it draws its strength from the people that it has the moral authority to speak for the nation. If direct election, which is the source of its vitality, is done away with, its power and prestige will come to an end, and the only weapon which the constitution places at our disposal for carrying on the national fight will be broken. Indirect election will thus be a national calamity of the first magnitude. It will disperse our forces and leave us without a rallying centre. We shall have no means of keeping the attention of the nation fixed on issues relating to the realisation of self-government and bringing pressure to bear on the authorities to make them yield to the national will.

All sections in the country are united in condemning the Committee's retrograde recommendation. Its disastrous consequences from the point of view of Indian interests are realised by all political parties. In fighting against it we would be fighting for our life. I feel that if direct election goes all is lost. It is much better for us to remain as we are than be under a constitution which adds to other objectionable features the heavy handicap of indirect election for the Assembly. Such a constitution cannot bring us freedom. It can only lead to our further enslavement.

The Council of State as constituted, in accordance with the Committee's scheme, will be one of the most oligarchical bodies known to any constitution. It may have a better title than the old United States Senate to be known as Millionaire's club. It will represent doubt-distilled conservatism. Ideas of political independence or social justice, if at all able to cross its threshold, will never thrive in its atmosphere.

It has been proposed that such a body should be the equal of the Assembly in every respect and have co-ordinate authority with it even in respect of the budget. This will certainly not be an aid to the development of responsible government. In France, says Finer, such a system has not led to the growth of an adequate sense of responsibility among the popular representatives or encouraged the formation of stable and well-defined parties. Party ties are loose, owing to the weakness of the Chamber of Deputies which cannot have its way in regard to the budget, and the deputies can always throw the responsibility for their failure to fulfil their promises on the Senate.

It is doubtful whether responsible government, properly so called, will develop under the White Paper scheme. At any rate the impediments to its growth will neither be few nor insignificant. It should not be completely smothered by being surrounded with additional safeguards.

## PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Indian public opinion has been opposed to the establishment of second chambers in the provinces. It is unfortunate that the Provincial Constitution Sub-Committee of the First Round Table Conference, recommended their creation in the U. P., Bihar and Orissa and Bengal, but it advised that this should not be done in any other province unless opinion in the province favoured such a step. A resolution recommending the creation of a second chamber in Madras was placed before the Madras Legislative Council in November, 1932, but it was defeated. Opinion generally in the province also appears to be opposed to a second chamber. The opinion of the Bombay Legislative Council was not invited on the subject, yet the Joint Select Committee has saddled Madras and Bombay with second chambers. Conservatism has been buttressed up everywhere.

The White Paper conferred large powers on the Governor in relation to provincial administration and endowed him with full authority to deal with matters relating to the maintenance of Law and Order and the efficiency of the police. It seemed hardly possible to go further without making law and order a reserved subject, but the White Paper proposals did not satisfy the Indian Police Service, which with the help of the diehards carried on a vigorous agitation in order to have the powers of the Ministers further curtailed. It placed its views before the Committee and in its Memorandum put forward proposals which amounted to the suppression of the future Home Member by the Inspector-General. The most important of these suggestions have been accepted by the Committee.

In several provinces Indians have been in charge of the Police department and no complaint has ever been made that they did anything to undermine the discipline and efficiency of the police force or misused the confidential information which they obtained in their official capacity. If they have shown a full sense of responsibility in administering the Police department, there is not the slightest excuse for treating them as political suspects in future. It may be desirable that the internal administration of the police should be left in the hands of the head of the department. But that the Governor should be given a special power to refuse his assent to the amendment of the Police Acts, in force in the province, or of such rules made under them as in his opinion affect the organisation or discipline of the police, is a gross reflection on Indian capacity and character and highly undesirable in the interests of discipline. The Inspector-General of Police will have free access to the Governor and will thus have an opportunity of influencing his mind. The Governor's decision to act against the views of the Ministry will presumably be based on representations made by him. The Inspector-General would thus be sitting in judgment on the Home Member and the position of the latter would be intolerable. The recommendation that the Governor should be asked in his Instrument of Instructions to direct that no records relating to intelligence regarding terrorism should not be disclosed to any officer outside the provincial police force without his sanction, is another indication of the position which provincial Ministers will occupy under the new constitution. They are to be responsible for the maintenance of law and order, but they must obey unquestioningly the behests of the Governor. The excuse that the informants and agents would not feel secure that their identity might not be revealed if the Minister immediately concerned could send for the records of the Intelligence Department will not bear a moment's examination. Indian Home Members have, as a rule, refrained from finding out the names of the persons through whom the Intelligence Department obtained information. But they have a right to examine the records and have sometimes done so. It has never been hinted yet that this has hampered the Intelligence Department in obtaining secret information. There is therefore no reason to suppose that the continuance of the existing practice will cause any trouble hereafter. To place a restriction of this kind is to lower the future Home Member, in the estimation of his subordinates, and to make the situation galling to a Minister with the least respect.

The analogy of England where the names of the informants are not communicated even to the Minister most directly concerned cannot be applied to India at present. The Prime Minister who, it is understood, has access to all secret records is the head of the Cabinet whose members stand or fall together. The Governor is in a very different position in relation to the Ministry and action taken at the instance of the Governor by the Minister responsible for Law and Order would seriously compromise his position before the public. The position of the Minister

under the Committee's recommendations constitutes a triumph for the I. P. S. I have good reasons for believing that encouraged by its victory it is trying to secure acceptance of the rest of the proposals it placed before the committee, but which have not been dealt with in its report.

The Central Intelligence Bureau, apart from co-ordinating the information received from provincial intelligence departments, works for various departments of Government such as the Army and the Foreign Affairs departments, but it is controlled by the Home department of the Government of India. The Committee recommends that it should be in future be removed from the control of the Home department and attached to one of the reserved departments. This is another proof of the inveterate distrust with which the authorities regard the future Indian Ministers, whether at the centre or in the provinces.

It has been proposed by the Committee that the Governor may assume charge of any department of the Government if he thinks that it is necessary to do so to put down terrorism. The implications of this proposal have not been clearly pointed out. At present if the Governor is not satisfied that the Ministers are taking such action as circumstances require, it is open to him to ask them to make room for another Ministry. If he cannot find any Ministry which will support him a constitutional crisis will have occurred and he will have the right under the Constitution Act to assume to himself all such powers as may appear necessary to him to carry on the government. But the committee appears to contemplate that the Ministers will remain in office even after the Governor has withdrawn any department from their control. How any Ministry can retain the confidence of the legislature by accepting so humiliating a position it is hard to see. It is to be hoped that the Ministers will have sufficient self-respect not to remain in office when they are distrusted and slighted.

The existence of terrorism in Bengal should not be allowed to interfere with the normal operation of provincial autonomy. The existing unrest is due largely to the dissatisfaction in the country with the present form of government. The satisfaction of the aspirations of the people is the only way of putting an end to it. The speedy transfer of power to Indian hands is therefore urgently required in Bengal. To make the abnormal conditions that prevail there an excuse for the retention of control over essential branches of administration by the Governor would be to play into the hands of the terrorists. The Committee's recommendation is based on a very short-sighted policy. The denial of provincial autonomy to Bengal will be no remedy for the present situation.

#### FINANCIAL RESTRICTIONS

As neither the central legislature nor the ministers under the new regime are likely to be imbued with a passion for reform they might have been trusted to discharge their responsibilities with fairness and prudence, but their financial powers have been severely restricted. No bill relating to coinage or currency can be brought forward except with the previous sanction of the Governor-General. The White Paper placed the same restriction on the introduction of a bill dealing with the powers and duties of the Federal Reserve Bank in relation to the arrangement of currency and exchange. The Joint Select Committee has gone further and recommended that "any amendment of the Reserve Bank or any legislation affecting the constitution and functions of the bank.....should require the prior sanction of the Governor-General in his discretion." The Governor-General will have the power to overrule the Ministry to preserve the financial stability credit of the Federation. He will be empowered to appoint a Financial Adviser to help him in the discharge of his responsibilities, who will take the place of the European Finance Member who will disappear with the promulgation of the new constitution.

The powers given to the Governor-General in regard to the budget are so wide as to leave only a nominal authority to the Indian Finance Minister of the future.

No reasonable grounds have been put forward to show that the Indian Ministers will disregard ordinary canons of financial prudence and inflict irreparable injury on the country just in order to spite England. The restrictions placed on their power are manifestly due to political distrust which is to be found in every part of the constitutional scheme.



## COMMERCIAL RESTRICTIONS

It is inevitable that the prospect of transfer of power from British to Indian hands should rouse apprehension in the minds of British capitalists with regard to the protection of their trading rights and the capital invested by them in India. The matter was discussed at considerable length in the conference and committees that took place from 1930-32, but it was considered almost entirely with reference to the rights of individual Britishers or British companies, trading in and with India. The question of trading relations and tariff arrangements between India and England never came within the purview of serious discussion. The White Paper was silent on the subject. The Associated Chambers of Commerce in their evidence before the Joint Select Committee made no reference to it. The Secretary of State for India placed a memorandum before the Committee revising and enlarging the White Paper proposals relating to commercial discrimination, but, there was not the faintest suggestion in them that Indo-British trade should be accorded special protection. That question figured only in the evidence of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce.

The Committee has added to the resentment, deep and wide, which the excessive commercial restrictions placed by the White Paper on India's power to develop her economic resources in the interests of her children gave rise to by recommending interference with the fiscal autonomy of India. It has recommended that the Governor-General should be empowered by statute to prevent the adoption of measures "legislative or administrative which would subject British goods imported into British India from the United Kingdom to discriminatory or penal treatment". The assurance that the Governor-General's power to intervene would be limited to restrictions the object of which was not to promote the economic interests of India but to injure those of the United Kingdom, does not in any way lessen the gravity of the step taken by it.

A flood of light is thrown on the meaning of the word "penal" by the evidence of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce. In the memorandum submitted by it a demand was made for the insertion of some safeguard in the constitution against the possibility of legislation "unduly penalising the British export trade". In reply to a question whether the committee had in mind action "spitefully intended to do injury to British interests or which is political in its motives", its representative said, "We did not necessarily mean spitefully, sir, but we meant some legislative enactment such as the specific duty on plain grey goods which is now 4 and three-eighth annas per pound, which entirely prevented our competing in those goods in the Indian market". This shows that the Chamber with the British Government should intervene not merely to disallow measures deliberately intended to injure British commerce but to secure a position of advantage for Lancashire in the Indian market.

That the rights of British and Indian traders should be regulated on the basis of reciprocity seems *prima facie* to be a fair demand. But it is to be noted that the power of initiative will rest with England. India cannot adopt special measures for the benefit of Indian trade and industry unless the British Government accord preferential rights to Britishers in England. To call such a relation reciprocal is to misuse words. There are so few Indians carrying on business in England and British trade and industry are so highly developed that England will never feel the need of special measures to protect her interests vis-a-vis India. Reciprocity between England and India will therefore mean the subordination of the interests of the latter to those of the former. We do not desire that any injustice should be done to British interests, but we have every right to ask that vested interests should not constitute a permanent barrier to our development.

## CIVIL SERVICES

The Services Sub-Committee of the First Round Table Conference recommended that recruitment and control of the Indian Civil and Police services should in future be in the hands of the Government of India and that judicial officers should be excluded from the cadre of the Indian Civil Service. The White Paper rejected both these recommendations. It laid down that the Secretary of State for India should continue to be the recruiting and controlling authority for those services, and as regards the appointment of civilians to judicial offices it not merely kept up the existing system but made the Indian Civil Service officers eligible for appointment as Chief Justice of a High Court. It maintained the status quo even with



regard to the recruitment of Indians and Europeans were to be recruited to the Indian Civil and Police Services in the proportions laid down by the Lee Commission.

It however made two new proposals in this connection. A statutory enquiry should be held into the question of the future recruitment for these services five years after the introduction of the new constitutional order, and action on the results of this country should be subject to the approval of both Houses of Parliament. The Committee has endorsed the recommendation of the White Paper regarding the system of recruitment but has proposed that the question of the recruitment of Indians in India in the prescribed proportions for both these services should be considered by His Majesty's Government. As regards the statutory enquiry it has recommended that no date should be fixed for it. It should be left to the Government of the day to decide whether the proper time for an enquiry has come.

The White Paper shows that the only persons whom the higher authorities have confidence in are the Governor-General and the Governors. If as the trusted agents of Parliament they are to have adequate power to exercise their authority the system of recruitment must be of such a character as to enable them to control the officers connected with those services on which the administration of the country depends in a special measure. As full reliance can be placed only on European officers, it has been thought essential that the proportion of British recruitment in what are known as the security services should not be reduced. The proposal that no change should be made in future without the approval of Parliament is probably the result of the fear that if the power of the executive is not curtailed, a Socialist Government might be so unpatriotic as to weaken the pillars on which British rule rests in this country. It ensures that no action will be taken which the Conservatives are opposed to. The White Paper however made a revision of the existing proportions of recruitment possible after the expiry of five years from the commencement of the new constitution, but the Committee is not prepared to go even as far as this. To change the constitution but to maintain the structure of the services unchanged is to follow two contradictory policies.

#### ARMY

As already stated the Committee has expressed the view that there is no essential relation between the problem of Indianisation and the constitutional issues with which it is concerned. Such a statement has been made for the first time by an authoritative body like the Joint Select Committee. It is true that the history of the grant of self-government to the colonies shows that internal autonomy was conceded to them before they were able to defend themselves. But owing to the friction which subsequently arose on the question of the control to be exercised over the imperial forces stationed there, the colonies were given to understand that they must make their own arrangements for their defence, and it is recognised now that self-rule and protection by an outside power are incompatible. In any case we may be sure that the colonial precedents will not be followed in the case of India. We have been repeatedly told by those in authority that our inability to defend ourselves is an obstacle to the achievement of full self-government, and that full powers cannot be conceded to India so long as the Indian army contains British troops and a considerable proportion of the regimental officers is British. It is evident therefore that the question of defence has a vital bearing on the future status of India.

It is unfortunately too true that India is as yet not capable of assuming responsibility for her defence, but her helplessness is entirely due to the policy pursued by England since the fifties of the last century.

The exclusion of Indians from the higher commissioned grades was not due to their incompetence but was the result of a policy deliberately and systematically followed by the British Government for political reasons. Those who ask us to be realists should ponder this carefully.

It cannot be adequately emphasised that it is not military but political considerations that bar the way to quicker progress in the Indianisation of the army.

One thing however has remained fairly constant during the past 75 years. Whatever the changes in numbers, the proportion between the sizes of the Indian and British sections has, broadly speaking, remained the same. It has been the policy of the British Government throughout this period not to allow the British army to fall below 40 per cent of the Indian army, and roughly speaking this relation between the strength of the two armies was prescribed by the Army Commission of 1859, whose recommendations were intended solely to maintain

British supremacy unchallenged. It is useless to talk of the progress of India towards self-government unless the policy of utter distrust which actuated the authorities in 1859 undergoes a radical change.

Notwithstanding the baneful effects of British policy in regard to the recruitment of the Indian army in the past, India was able to supply about a million soldiers during the Great War, and the pages of official publications testify to their efficiency and bravery. There may be political objections to the substitution of Indian for British soldiers, but the change cannot be opposed on military grounds.

#### BURMA

Separation having been decided upon, it is only proper that the interests of Indians residing in Burma should receive the consideration to which they are entitled. Indians who are asking for complete financial and commercial autonomy for themselves cannot deny this to Burma. We do not want that the power to pursue a policy calculated to promote its prosperity should be unjustly withheld from Burma, but we cannot allow any discrimination to be made between Indians and Europeans in Burma in regard to employment in the public services or of carrying on trade or following a profession. Indians should be treated on an equal footing with the Britishers.

### Second Day—Poona—30th. December 1934

#### Indians in Zanzibar

The open session of the Liberal Federation resumed at 11 A. M. to-day. A resolution recording the Federation's sense of the loss the Liberal Party had sustained in the deaths of *Sir P. C. Mitter* and *Mr. A. P. Sen* was moved from the chair and passed by the house standing.

*Sir Phiroz Sethna* then moved the following resolution on Zanzibar :—

“(a) The Federation views with grave concern and resentment the sudden adoption, some months ago, by the Government of Zanzibar of several decrees, the cumulative effect of which must inevitably be to make it impossible for the Indian community to earn its living in the land where it had been established a long time prior to the establishment of the British protectorate. These devices adversely affect Indian interests and place them at a disadvantage as compared with their European commercial rivals and create bitterness between them and the Arab and African communities. The fact that the Land Alienation Decree imposes even on an Indian born in Zanzibar disabilities which do not apply to Arabs born in Arabia who are not British subjects, clearly shows that the new legislation is aimed against Indians. Such differential treatment to Indians in a colony under the direct control of His Majesty's Government which insists on equality of Britishers with Indians in India, gives rise to separatist feelings and tends to destroy the unity of the empire.

(b) The Federation records its appreciation of the prompt action of the Government in deputing Mr. K. P. S. Menon, I. C. S., to investigate into the situation on the spot. It regrets, however, that Mr. Menon's report has not been published. The Federation urges immediate publication of Mr. Menon's report on the Zanzibar decrees and an announcement by the Government of India that they have full sympathy with the grievances of Zanzibar Indians and that they will strain every nerve to get them redressed and to have the status of Indians in Zanzibar placed on a permanently satisfactory footing.

(c) The Federation also urges an early publication of Mr. Menon's report on the marketing legislation in Tanganyika, Uganda and Kenya, which legislation is believed to be detrimental to the Indian interests.

Commending the resolution for the acceptance of the House *Sir Phiroz Sethna* said that the question of Indians overseas had been brought before all the political parties of this country. After describing the nature of discrimination that has resulted from the recent legislation *Sir Phiroz* said the Government of India promptly took action and appointed Mr. Menon to go on a deputation to make enquiries at the spot. Mr. Menon had submitted his report which for one reason or another the Government of India was not publishing. Mr. Menon's report, the speaker thought, must either be a condemnation of the Indian attitude in Zanzibar or total condemnation of Zanzibar executive's action. Personally he thought the

latter truer and therefore it was that the Government did not want to publish the report as it would not be to the liking of the White Hall.

*Mr. Nashir Barucha* seconded the resolution which was carried unanimously.

### The Joint Committee Report

*The Rt. hon. Srinivasa Sastri* then moved the main resolution on the Joint Parliamentary Committee's report. The resolution read as follows :—

"The National Liberal Federation of India records its profound regret at the finding of Joint Parliamentary Committee's report which instead of removing the glaring defects and shortcomings of the White Paper proposals, pointed out by the Federation at its previous two sessions, has, in utter disregard of almost the entire body of Indian opinion of all shades including the British Indian Delegation, introduced further highly objectionable and reactionary features, rendering impossible responsible government in the provinces and the centre, which the British Government profess to give to India, wholly illusory. The Federation is convinced that any constitution based on the lines of the Joint Parliamentary Committee's Report would be wholly unacceptable to all shades of Indian political opinion and will far from allaying very much intensify the present deep political discontent in the country. This Federation therefore does not want any legislation based upon the Joint Committee's Report."

*Mr. Sastri* said that the resolution which he had read out depicted the general feeling of the Federation on the subject. He next referred to his speech at the Calcutta session of the Federation and said that he then spoke only about the White Paper proposals when nothing was known about what the Joint Parliamentary Committee was going to do. He then said that if it was in his power he would do without the new constitution proposed in the White Paper. Now the Joint Parliamentary Committee had reported and what did he find? He found that his opinion could not be altered as things have been aggravated and it was impossible to contemplate with peace and ease the enactment of the constitution proposed in the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report. If this constitution was enacted it would not only affect their political transactions but their very daily existence. But irrespective of the Indian public opinion the Government was preparing for the inauguration of the new regime.

He referred to *Mr. Baldwin's* statement in the House of Commons during the Joint Parliamentary Committee debate, when he said that both the Government of India and the provincial Government had assured the British Government that the new constitution not only was workable but there would be people to work it. As far as he could see he felt the Government would be able to get some people to work the constitution with contentment. He thought there would be continual wrangle between the people and the Government. It might be worked but there would be no peace in the land nor there would be peace between England and India and bitterness will increase. He entirely agreed with *Mr. Churchill* when he said (although in a different sense) that the new constitution did not suit India and would plunge the country into agitation.

The chief offence of this document, said *Mr. Sastri*, was that it did not contain the words 'Dominion Status'. 'We contend', continued *Mr. Sastri*, 'Dominion Status has been promised to us on the highest authority. It was not merely the Viceregal declaration, although made by the Viceroy, but it had the authority of the British Cabinet of the day. If it had been made only by the Labour Government it might not have been so binding on other Governments but the Viceregal declaration which formed the basis of the British Government's policy regarding the Indian constitutional question, was debated in Parliament at first, after the first Round Table Conference and secondly, after the second Round Table Conference. The Prime Minister's speech during the second debate was based on this declaration and this was voted on by Parliament. During that debate frequent references were made to Dominion Status.'

'May we not claim, I ask, that the word of Parliament—not merely of the Government of the day—is a pledge? (Cheers). What Parliament has given only Parliament can take away and no other authority. The present Government evidently does not love it. They want to take it back. Their spokesmen referred to it with abhorrence. Some of them want to annul it but they dare not do so because it cannot be done without the sanction of Parliament. During the recent debate in the House of Commons several members condemned it. Sir Samuel

Hoare himself did not once use the expression. Sir John Simon, who, by the way, after his boycott had been resurrected and put in a great place of power, could only say that the policy of Britain regarding India had been clearly stated in the Montagu declaration of 1917, namely, progressive realization of responsible government for India. This declaration was interpreted by Lord Irwin in his declaration as Dominion Status. Sir John Simon did not approve it. He did not repudiate it but went back to the declaration of 1917. It was left to the Archbishop of Canterbury to openly say that he did not like to use the expression.

'Dominion Status fills these British statesmen with dread. It must be because it would mean an end of Indian exploitation and an end of the domination by Britain which they dread. If that is the dread is it not necessary that we should with corresponding tenacity cling to it? Yet I have heard some of our statesmen saying why should bother about this expression provided we get the essence of a good constitution. I strongly dissent from these. But I would ask, does the proposed constitution come up anywhere near? My answer is an emphatic No. It is a reactionary constitution, denying us all the rights for our betterment. It is anti-national and anti-democratic. Neither in the goal nor in the steps it proposes, it is a good constitution. Yet the Government has got ready to carry it out. They have obtained expressed or implied consent of certain of our countrymen'.

Mr. Sastri next dealt with safeguards and said, 'We are willing to have certain type of safeguards. These were agreed to by Mahatma Gandhi. It was agreed to between him and Lord Irwin that all safeguards should be demonstrably in the interest of India. But the Government in England has changed and the new Government did not want to carry out the promise.

'The new safeguards came in not in the interest of India but according to Sir Samuel Hoare in the joint interest of India and Britain. This was a step backward but that is not all. It was left to the original maker of this agreement with Mahatma Gandhi, Lord Halifax, to say that every one of these safeguards was in the interests of India. Everybody who asked for safeguard got it for mere asking. These can be in the interest of India only if we are faced with a position that unless we accept these we would be nowhere. In that case it would mean that we will be forced to accept them but that would be blackmailing. In that sense these safeguards are in India's interests'.

Dealing with princes, he said that when they announced their readiness to enter the federation he thought they would come in as a help to their country and not as a hindrance. (Hear, hear) The princes who proclaimed their enthusiasm for Dominion Status in the first Round Table Conference were now in favour of federation and they did not mind the ideal of Dominion Status being lowered provided the federation ideal was not touched. In his opinion this was the greatest harm they were doing to their country. He warned them against their fate. They were being used as blocks in the way of India's march towards freedom. They might be safe now but a time would come when India would retaliate. (Cheers). 'Before they came in we were thinking only of British India. When Lord Irwin made his statements he had not any idea of the princes. That declaration was meant only for British India. It was at the first Round Table Conference that they made the offer to enter the Federation. Then we accepted it as it was an inexorable condition for the grant of central responsibility. I hope they will not mar this ideal of Dominion Status'.

'It has been said, Our title to distinction and glory is owing to our readiness to co-operate at all events. I ask you, do you agree? Are we also invited to cooperate in the denial or refusal of Dominion Status for India? We may be chronic cooperators (laughter), but I do not think we shall go thus far. Are we asked to give our cooperation to enact this constitution riddled through with safeguards as being in the interests of our countrymen to take them to the land of their cherished goal? Is that kind of cooperation asked of us? I do not think this meeting will go to that length of co-operation. I ask, what is the return we get for our cooperation? From the third Round Table Conference we were excluded. The ability and wisdom of the Indian delegates to the Joint Parliamentary Committee has been commended but not a single change they suggested has been accepted nor anything they objected to dropped. Close on the heels of this phenomenon, in the political history of the world unparalleled and unprecedented. No, sir, it is impossible for the Liberal Party to give an atom of cooperation. (Prolonged cheers and clapping). Co-operation with friends that wish well of us will be worth while but cooperation with those who have displayed their utmost distrust of us, who do not care for



our views and demands and who enact a constitution in utter disregard of our wishes—what is cooperation with them? I ask, I would call it suicide. (Prolonged cheers). If that is what we are asked to do, there may be many who may be willing to cooperate but not the Liberal Party.

He referred to Mr. Chamberlain's remarks that the Liberals have gone down in the Assembly elections because they did not support the new constitution. He thought that the Joint Parliamentary Committee constitution was so good and one for which the Liberals were longing. But he (the speaker), however, would not advise his countrymen to kiss Mr. Chamberlain's baby. Mr. Sastri was evidently exhausted as a result of his 80 minutes' oration which kept the audience spell-bound.

*Sir Chimanlal Setalvad*, seconding the resolution on the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report, said that the Liberal Federation had the opportunity twice of showing the glaring defects and shortcomings of the White Paper after its publication and it had done it. A joint memorandum was presented to the Committee, but not one undesirable feature of the White Paper was dropped, nor was even one suggestion therein adopted, though that memorandum was submitted by men of all communities and interests and though the authors of the joint memorandum were nominated by the Government itself. Continuing, he observed that safeguards were packed in J. P. C. constitution, particularly, the commercial safeguards, and he condemned the proposal for the powerlessness of the Indian legislature over the British companies already in existence or even the prospective ones in India.

Regarding shipping, he said, 'Could mockery go any further when they talk of reciprocity relating to shipping and say that Indian shipping can compete with British shipping?'

Referring to the clauses relating to the judiciary and eligibility of civilians for chief justiceship, he said that such a proposal would tend to undermine the impartiality of the Judiciary in India. England was going to lose both her political hold and trade in India. If the constitution imposed was as retrograde as the proposed one, the Swadeshi movement might be intensified and the boycott of foreign goods once again revived on a greater scale. He said that on the point of bayonet the British trade in India could not be preserved.

Continuing, he said that there was only one test for any constitution—whether the people for whom the constitution was intended were willing to accept and work it peacefully. Such a test, when applied to the Joint Parliamentary Committee report, showed that it was wholly unacceptable to Indians and would intensify the discontent in the country and there would be no peace at all.

*Rao Raja Pandit Shyam Bihari Misra* (United Provinces), supporting the resolution observed that the communal 'award' was a great defect. The Lucknow Pact was enough to meet their needs and he opined that as there would be some people to work any constitution it would be improper on the part of the Liberals not to work it, even if it was inflicted on India against the wishes of the people of the country.

*Mr. M. D. Shahane* (Central Provinces), supporting, condemned the provision for indirect election to the Federal legislature. Speaking on behalf of the younger section of the Liberals, he expressed a greater resentment at the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report than even the elders.

*Mr. A. D. Shroff* (Bombay) said that the industrial and commercial development of India was being put off for long by the recommendations of the report. He further said the fiscal autonomy convention has been broken in the past several times in spirit. According to the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report the fiscal autonomy convention would cease to exist and trade treaties which would be for the guidance of India were being formulated without consultation of the Indian legislature and the interests vitally affected thereby. It had been found in the past that whenever the interests of Britain and India came into conflict, the interests of India were ignored. He further observed that it was most unsportsmanlike on the part of the Britishers to frame rules restricting the admission of Indians in Burma.

*Mr. E. Vinayaka Rao* (Madras), supporting the resolution, answered the question whether the report was not good. He said it was like the proverbial curate's egg which was good in parts. He criticised the sentence in the report that alleged manifestations of public opinion are often of doubtful value'. The speaker said that it was adding insult to injury. There was only one safeguard which Britain



should introduce and that was winning the hearts of Indians. He queried: "Are we wrong in asking the Britishers to fulfil the promises made to India?"

Mr. *B. S. Kamat*, confining himself to the reactionary charges proposed by the Joint Parliamentary Committee in the provincial field, condemned the provision conferring power on the Governor to exercise his special responsibility even in transferred subjects and said the triune policy of federation, provincial autonomy and central responsibility was hedged in with a number of provisions affecting adversely the permanent interests of India. He added that the reservation in the report were not intended to lead India to full responsibility but were framed to protect vested interests in India. He declared: 'We must draw a moral when unity fails, constitutional methods fail and even unconstitutional methods fail where the interests of the Britisher are concerned.'

*Sir Phiroz Sethna*, further supporting the resolution, observed that since Nov. 22 there had been a chorus of condemnation of the Joint Parliamentary Committee report both in the press and on the platform. The memorandum presented by the Indian delegation was unanimous and as the secretary of the committee he observed that their sole object was to put forth their minimum demands which were expected to be fulfilled. He added, "We are to get not self-government but safeguards government as somebody has said."

The setback was threefold, according to *Sir Pheroz Sethna*. The first and the most pernicious recommendation was indirect election. The second was those departments were to be controlled by the Viceroy and his advisers. According to the present constitution the Viceroy and his Cabinet had to agree, but according to the new constitution relating to special departments the Viceroy was the sole judge and his advisers had no power. Thirdly, according to the present constitution, their goal was self-government and dominion status, but that was impossible under the Joint Parliamentary Committee scheme. The Montagu-Chelmsford reform was even more liberal than the one presented by the Joint Parliamentary Committee. Quoting from the Montagu-Chelmsford report *Sir Pheroze Sethna* showed how different the policy of that report was from the Joint Parliamentary Committee report.

Analysing the provisions of the Joint Parliamentary Committee report relating to commercial discrimination he showed the possibility of great harm to India and in particular criticised the non-reservation of Indian coastal shipping to India. He added that some years ago efforts were made to restrict the Japanese coastal trade in India but the possibility of Japanese retaliation dissuaded the Government from enforcing any such scheme. He observed that it was sheer mockery to constitute British vested interests under the cloak of reciprocity when they were against Indian interests. He said, 'We want the Government to change the constitution of India different from that given in the Joint Parliamentary Committee report and unless it is done there won't be peace and contentment in India. We ask only for such things as are enjoyed by the dominions of Australia, Canada and South Africa. The Britishers would not have dared to do this anywhere else. There is a limit to exploitation. I am a firm believer in the British connection and am bold in saying it. *Sir Pheroz Sethna* concluded with an exhortation of the late Mr. Tilak's famous words. Get what you can and fight for more'.

*The hon. Mr. P. N. Saprú* (Allahabad) referred to *Sir Samuel Hoare's* speech that if this constitution was not passed he saw no chance of reforms for a long time. Speaking for himself Mr. Saprú said he would be glad if it happened as the Joint Parliamentary Committee scheme contained no advance but on the contrary was retrograde. It represented an Indianized Government backed by British bayonets. Provincial autonomy adumbrated a mere change in government, not an advance. It was a constitution which could only lead to oligarchical dictatorship, which India did not want. He could not conceive of a responsible Government with indirect election. The new constitution would settle nothing and the struggle for India's freedom would go on.

*Mrs. Sushila Bai Deshpande* (Bombay), supporting the resolution, pleaded for equal franchise for men and women and asked why women should be inferior to men in matters like these. She on behalf of the women of India pleaded for necessary legislation changing the Hindu law of property. Concluding, she asserted that with the intelligent co-operating of women alone would India quickly achieve her *Swaraj*.

*Sr. Gopalji Jehangir* (Bombay), speaking next in support of the resolution, said that the first stage of constitution-making for India commenced with the

Simon Commission without Indians and from that stage they passed through three Round Table Conferences and finally to the Joint Parliamentary Committee. He said, 'We must acknowledge our said disappointment at the report. Not only that. A wrangle is going on in England between the politicians and the statesmen and there is party warfare. India is now completely out of the picture and Indians are the victims of the wrangle of selfish and sometimes malicious Britishers. They get advice from Lancashire and the British diehard but neglect Indian opinion. The joint memorandum was signed first by his Highness the Aga Khan and if such a memorandum could be rejected by the Britishers there will be no reason why India should not say that the Joint Parliamentary Committee report is unacceptable. There is no unity in India and if there should be complete unadulterated unity anywhere it will be a miracle. But to base the constitution on the position of the country which is not united and putting forward provisions which are irksome and against India's aspirations and attribute them to want of unity in India is not a fair argument.

He queried, 'Who are these men who said that the future constitution would be used for unfair purposes? They are few in number and undue importance is given to their words and needs. For the sins of a few the whole of India is penalised. Is it fair that the view-point of a section of Indians should be based upon for making entire India suffer? There are numbers of Britishers in England who place before the public of England arguments against India. There is great need of educating the people of England and we have suffered enough by not educating them. Poor and ignorant people about India are frightened out of their lives by mischief-mongers in Britain. We must and it is our duty to proclaim as boldly as we can that this constitution is completely unacceptable. Whether Britain means it or not all we can do to-day is to show that the constitution is being imposed upon India against the wishes of every single Indian. The goal of our party is Dominion Status that is enjoyed by the British Dominions to-day plus the Status of Westminster, but there is not a word about Dominion Status in the entire report. It is a deliberate attempt at breach of faith. The Britishers brought to India a high sense of duty and the best of their ability and as between Indian and Indian governed India with justice and equity. We now find solemn promises made by Britain unceremoniously set aside.

"They will have to believe it. They will be forced to leave it. They will be driven out of India," said Sir Cowasji, though Indians are now divided. If England will honour her pledge the sooner the better and say that they will give Dominion Status within the period of (?) years. If England does not do it she will be forced to sever her connection with India sooner than she expects.'

*Sir Govind Rao Pradhan* said that the White Paper was an ugly child with a squint eye and subdued nose. The Joint Parliamentary Committee had taken off more things than the White Paper. The entire scheme was based on the distrust of Indians and framed in the interests of the Britishers.

*Mr. T. R. Venkata Rama Sastri* referred to the Tory attempt to torpedo the Round Table Conference plan and its failure. But meanwhile the Government had decided what they should do. His opinion of the Joint Parliamentary Committee scheme was that it was wholly unacceptable. According to the present constitution there was a provision for the transfer of all subjects in the provinces, but the Joint Parliamentary scheme removed even that. Much stress was laid on the lack of unity in India, but the speaker doubted when the unity contemplated by the British Government could be achieved. The Joint Parliamentary Committee constitution had not provided for automatic growth, but further progress depended on the will of the Parliament. The scheme conferred no real provincial autonomy, not to talk of central responsibility. He urged the continuation of the present constitution.

*Mr. N. M. Joshi*, expressing the labour viewpoint, condemned the scheme. He reminded the British public and politicians of the fall of great empires like the Roman empire and said that by passing this resolution the Federation would have rendered a great service to the British empire as it stressed the ideal of Dominion Status.

*Dr. R. P. Paranjpye* said that the Joint Parliamentary Committee scheme took them backwards. Even women had been given separate electorates despite their opposition to it. He would not be sorry if the threat of Sir Samuel Hoare to scrap the reform scheme was carried out,

Professor *Har Datta Sharma* and Mr. *Altekar* further supported the resolution.

Mr. *J. N. Basu* said that the two tests were whether the constitution satisfied the people and secondly whether it was workable. The Joint Parliamentary Committee scheme failed both the tests. The responsibility conferred was very diluted. Mr. *N. C. Barucha* and Rao Bahadur *Ramaswami Sivan* further supported the resolution.

Mr. *C. Y. Chintamani*, the last speaker of the day, subjected the proposals to severe criticism by putting a number of questions and answering them himself. He asked if the scheme satisfied their sentiment of self-respect and replied 'no'. They wanted executive responsibility to the legislature in order to improve the economic conditions of the people, but the J. P. C. scheme did not satisfy this condition. They (Liberals) wanted to help in the ordered progress of the country but the proposed reforms would not help them to do that. They set their eyes on the ideal of Dominion Status but that ideal had been thrown to the winds and they were not going to have Dominion Status. The British statesmen now went to the extent of saying that the phrase, 'Dominion Status', was cant. He would ask to them to read their own Parliament's Act, namely, the Statute of Westminster. They wanted a responsible central government for British India, but the J. P. C. not only did not give this, but dismissed for all time the idea of responsible self-government by refusing to give the control of the army to Indians which according to the present scheme was to remain in the hands of the British Parliament. In regard to the army they would continue to be in the same position as they were in the past, namely, in the position of utter helplessness and impotency.

The Viceroy in his speech at the Calcutta European Association said that none could doubt the sincerity of the British policy. He had also said he wanted to be the first constitutional Governor-General of India. He asked under the new constitution whether the Governor-General would be more constitutional than at present. The answer to that question was writ large in black type on every page of the J. P. C. report. He would be a worse despot than he now was. He would have legislative, financial and undefined and unlimited powers to do what he thought was good for England de jure in complete subordination to the Secretary of State. In the name of making an advance they had taken away what India was enjoying since 1921.

They were told the advantages of federation and provincial autonomy, but the speaker characterised these two things as proposed in the J. P. C. scheme as not meriting any approbation. He condemned the way in which Mr. Montagu's provision for the automatic growth of the Indian constitution by an enquiry at the end of ten years was made use of by the Tory Government to inflict the J. P. C. scheme on India.

The proposals were stamped with absolute distrust of Indians and such an insulting offer was unworthy of England to offer and unworthy of India to accept. His answer to such an offer was : 'We don't want it : take it back.'

The resolution was unanimously carried.

Messrs. *P. N. Saprú*, *S. M. Bose* and *Surendra Nath Varma* were elected honorary secretaries until the next session of the Federation which, it was resolved, should be held at Nagpur. Mr. *Kunzru*, concluding the session, expressed the hope that the Government would have sufficient wisdom not to resist the united wishes of the nation. The session thus concluded after nine hours' sitting.

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# The Southern India Liberal Confederation

Opening Day—Madras—29th. September 1934

The Thirteenth Confederation of the South Indian Liberal Federation commenced its session, at the Victoria Public Hall, Madras, on the 29th. September 1934 under the Presidency of the *Hon'ble the Raja of Bobbili*, the Chief Minister with the Government of Madras. A large gathering of ladies and gentlemen was present.

Prominent among those present were : Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar, Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar, Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chettiar, Dr. P. Varadarajulu Naidu, the Zemindar of Chnnampet, Rao Bahadur C. Tadulingam, Mr. R. Surya Rao Naidu, Mr. A. A. Hayles, Mr. Taylor, Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliar, Mr. P. Venkataramana Rao Naidu, Dewan Bahadur A. M. M. Murugappa Chettiar, Mr. G. Jagannatha Raju, Mr. C. Gopala Menon, Mr. P. V. Krishniah Choudry, Mr. S. G. Rangaramanujam, Sir Mahomed Usman, Sir M. Krishnan Nair, Mr. Jamal Mohomed, the Hon'ble Mr. P. T. Rajan, the hon. Mr. S. Kumaraswami Reddiar, the Zamindar of Minampalle, the Kumararajah of Venkatagiri, Dewan Bahadur J. Venkatanarayana Naidu, Mr. S. A. Annamalai Chettiar, Kumararaja M. A. Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad, Sowcar Abdul Hakim, Dewan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, Mr. Balasundaram Naidu and Mr. Yabya Ali.

## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

The Hon'ble Raja Sahib delivered the Presidential address, of which the following is the text :—

India is on the threshold of great constitutional changes and recent events have made this session perhaps the most momentous in the history of our Party. During the course of our deliberations, you will be called upon to take decisions on important issues which will shape the course of events in this great country of ours. At no time has there been a greater need than now to show your political sagacity, your unfailing patriotism and devotion to the true interests of the country and your unswerving loyalty to the ideals which have been guiding us all these years and which stand to-day more completely vindicated than ever before. There comes a time in the history of nations as in the lives of individuals when in the stress and strife of the daily struggle the nation is carried off its feet temporarily by a form of national hysteria, and people refuse to recognise hard facts or face ugly realities. But, sooner or later, the very impact of such an unreal atmosphere brings people back to a more sober frame of mind, when those who have refused to succumb to the weakness of momentary cheap applause, have the satisfaction that they have done their duty by the country, infinitely better and with more courage by refusing to be moved by cajolery, threats, abuse and vilification. I am led to these reflections when I think of the present political situation in our country and the future possibilities; and I must confess to a feeling of gratification that, after all these years, the wise path chalked out by our leaders is more and more clearly seen as the only straight path and those who had scorned to look at that way have remained to bless those who had shown them the way.

## "NON-CO-OPERATION—A THING OF THE PAST"

For very nearly fifteen years one of the prominent political parties in the country, the Congress, had preached that Non-co-operation was the only way to political salvation. As we have seen, this movement has been used for various purposes. This has led to the ruin of many innocent persons and their families. Congressmen have not hesitated to exploit the youthful enthusiasm of our students for their political purposes, which has resulted in marring the future careers of the rising generation. Trade and industry and handicrafts have suffered, and,







when confronted with the realities of the situation and working within the limits of Parliamentary conventions. We are relieved also to find that their activities will be diverted along constitutional channels and the temptations to lead astray the people of this country, and to make them suffer untold miseries and privations which it is hard for them to bear, will, to that extent, be minimised. It is significant that while the leaders—whatever their temporary sacrifices may have been in the pursuit of the programme of non-co-operation and civil disobedience—have generally been able to rally round the bulk of the rank and file to whom these sacrifices have been immeasurable, and who have been completely ruined, many a hearth has been rendered desolate, thanks to this policy of non-co-operation.

#### ELECTION ISSUES OF CONGRESS

The Congress, in their manifesto, have made the rejection of the White Paper and the calling of a Constituent Assembly as the issues for the ensuing Assembly election. It has also been stated by certain Congress leaders that only Congressmen are true Indians and they alone are entitled to represent and speak for the country.

The White Paper is no longer an issue before the country as the Joint Parliamentary Committee is now seized with the whole question. What their recommendations are likely to be one cannot foretell and can only hope that prudence and political sagacity will dictate a policy of wise statesmanship to those at the helm of affairs in the interests alike of Great Britain and India, without being influenced by the Diehard section there or in this country.

#### THE WHITE PAPER

As regards our attitude towards the White Paper, our position has been made clear by our representatives at the Round Table Conference and in the Legislatures. At the Second Round Table Conference a suggestion was made that immediate inauguration of provincial autonomy may solve the problem for the present. That suggestion was, however, rejected by the delegates representing this country and, as a member of the Justice Party, I expressed views, in no uncertain terms that if mere Provincial Autonomy were conceded without responsibility at the Centre, the scheme would be unworkable and totally unacceptable to our Party. A clear realisation of what this implies and of how Indian problems are so inter-connected that there can be no real Provincial Autonomy without responsibility at the Centre, will be self-evident to all those who have followed the working of the present constitution and the difficulties with which it is bristling. Autonomous Government in the provinces without responsibility at the Centre is a contradiction in terms. We stand by the White Paper scheme as modified by the Joint Memorandum. I think I can safely anticipate this as the unanimous desire of this Confederation.

#### PROPOSAL FOR A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

As regards the Constituent Assembly I am sure such a proposal is not going to deceive any practical politician. Rejection of the Communal Award which is implied in the rejection of the White Paper is not going to advance the interests of the country. I know no community is completely satisfied with the Award. I need not, at this stage, go into the merits of that Award. The fact remains that we were unable to solve the problem ourselves, and we requested His Majesty's Government to solve it for us. The Premier undertook this thankless task and has removed the greatest obstacle to constitutional progress. Even a cursory glance at the Communal Award must convince every fair-minded Indian of the bona fides of the British Government, and when, to this, is added the further fact that the Premier himself has expressly stated that the Communal Award is a tentative one and that it would be open to the communities to arrive at a settlement and to claim that the settlement should replace the Communal Award when such is the tenor of the Premier's statement, we cannot too strongly condemn those critics who try to place the most unfair and mischievous construction on the Award as a whole, and who have tried to exploit the situation for their benefit without success, little realising how much they are to blame for not having, as men with political sagacity, tackled these problems successfully themselves.

When real political power is being transferred into the hands of Indians it is but natural that the various minorities and interests should be apprehensive of what their future position would be in the body politic. It is therefore necessary

to provide for certain safeguards to satisfy the minorities. Believe me when I say that we can get the substance of power only after we prove to the minorities that they have nothing to fear by actually working the new constitution and then demanding our birthright with a united voice.

#### JUSTICE PARTY'S RECORD

If to-day we have demonstrated to the world that Indians are capable of managing their own affairs and if the British Government are actively considering the grant of further reforms it is, I may state with pardonable pride, due in no small measure to the successful working of the Montford Reforms by the Justice Party. We are therefore entitled to pronounce our opinion on the constitutional problem now awaiting solution with greater authority than the Congress party who have always shirked responsibility. Diarchy, as its authors have confessed, is only a transitional measure, and we have worked it, fully conscious of its limitations, to demonstrate our fitness for self-government. We cannot stand still. No one can put back the hands of time. We must advance. Mere rejection of the White Paper without showing an alternative will simply strengthen the hands of our enemies, the Diehards in England. If safeguards in the White Paper have been strengthened from what has been conceded at the Round Table Conference as a transitional measure it is no small extent due to the talk of independence and the repudiation of debts. For this the Congress should thank themselves. As a political party wedded to constitutional methods, and standing for the attainment of Swaraj for India as a component part of the British Empire, it is our duty not to sound a note of warning that any scheme of reforms failing short of our minimum demands would be disastrous to the interests of the Empire. Extremists there would be in all countries and they are irreconcilable. Any constitution that is not acceptable to the Justice Party and other parties who think alike—and they represent the great majority of sane political opinion in this country—doomed to fail at the very outset.

#### DEPRESSED CLASS PROBLEM

The creed of our Party has always been "political as well as social justice" and this brings me on to the question of the Depressed Classes as they are still unfortunately termed and for whose welfare and uplift our Party has all along stood and tried to do its level best during the past seventeen years. The Justice Party has always stood for those cherished ideas which have been set before us by great leaders, Sir Theagaraya Chetty, Dr. Nair and the Raja of Panagal claim to be the earliest and perhaps the only political Party in India that had put the problem of the Depressed Classes as one of the main planks of their political work in the country and the legislature. If to-day you find the members of the depressed and oppressed classes in the legislature of the land, in the municipalities and the local bodies, in larger and larger numbers, I respectfully claim that it is due in a signal measure to the strenuous fight put by our Party for remedying the disabilities and redressing the grievances of the Depressed Classes. Political advance must go hand in hand with social emancipation and believe me when I say that India can never attain to the full stature of self-government unless and until we are able to blot out this stigma of untouchability. We have done much and more remains to be done. We believe in a process of levelling up and it should be our earnest endeavour to work for the economic and social upliftment of our less fortunate brethren until complete equality is attained.

#### SELF-RESPECT MOVEMENT

I may here refer to a activity that has, in recent years, legitimately claimed a great deal of public attention, that is, to the part played by the Youth League and the Self-Respect Movements in Southern India. These movements have been subjected to a great deal of criticism, much of which, however, is ill-founded and based on an imperfect understanding of the ideals of these movements. As I understand it, the Self-Respect movement stands for certain great ideals to make Hinduism greater and more glorious than it was in the past, to rid it of all those absurdities which are the accretions of an unfortunate era of the past, and unite us in a solid federation so that all those who profess to follow the Hindu faith may feel that they are brethren following one of the most ancient and glorious religions of the world. No longer should the foreigner point his finger

of scorn at this or that particular phase of Hinduism which belies its cosmopolitan tendency by inflicting personal hardship on classes or communities. If a few youths in their exuberant enthusiasm have been carried away beyond the bounds of Hinduism it will not do to fight shy of the new movements, but political wisdom and sagacity lie in taking them into our fold and guiding them aright along the paths of duty and rectitude. In every religion there is from time to time a reform movement which tries to bring back the pristine glory of the religion and makes it acceptable to all classes of men. If our great country is to reach the cherished goal, the whole structure of our caste system must go completely.

Our Party which is representative of all interests has naturally a great responsibility to discharge in reconciling apparently divergent interests and thus bringing into harmony these different interests for the greater benefit of the community. It is a matter for gratification that a measure of a contentious nature vitally affecting the landholders and ryots has been satisfactorily settled and placed on the Statute-Book. I take this opportunity of expressing my sincere thanks to the representatives of both classes for the statesmanlike manner in which they have faced the intricate issues and for the political wisdom they have shown in placing a satisfactory solution on the Statute-Book. To the landholders, I would say that in the peace, contentment, prosperity and happiness of their tenantry lie their prosperity and happiness, and it should be their constant endeavour even with sacrifices, to satisfy all the legitimate claims and hopes of their tenants. To those who are tenants, may I venture to suggest that they will be following a wise policy if they will discard suspicion and distrust and base their demands on equality and justice, realising that the landlord has also a point of view which deserves consideration? In a frank recognition of the principle that for the agricultural economy of the land the landholder is as much a necessity as a contented peasantry lies the future prosperity of our country. I do hope that the happy relationship thus created will be fostered and that both will continue to work in unison and concord with each other for the greater benefit of all. Our political opponents have tried their utmost to misrepresent the work of the Party in this respect, but we are on sure ground as a study of the Bill as introduced in the Council, and as it was finally shaped by our Party, would show our claims are based on solid achievements.

We have by our work in this presidency proved to the hilt that we Non-Brahmins can shoulder responsibility and carry on the administration in the larger interests of the country unnerved by cheap satires from the usual unfriendly quarters and unmoved by the campaign of misrepresentations and vilification which it is our lot to bear. No one who has worked diarchy can be ignorant of its grave defects and when to that is added a financial crisis of grave magnitude, the discerning public, and especially those who have some experience of administrative matters, will realise the limitations and serious handicaps under which the Ministry have had to work. Even the best of schemes can be shattered on the rock of financial impossibility. Representing as we do the agricultural population of this province, we felt that the relief of the prevailing acute agricultural distress should have a first call on our financial resources and many a scheme which was calculated to expand the nation-building activities of the transferred departments had to be sacrificed.

#### PARTY OR GROUP SYSTEM

Congressmen have stated that there are only two parties in the country—Government and Congress. But I make bold to state that, with the advent of complete provincial autonomy, there will be only two organised parties as far as this province is concerned, namely, the Congress and the Justice. Let us realise that the first essential for success and reaching our political goal is the united voice of the country. It is the duty of our Party to persuade the various religious sects and communities to present a united front and bring the Hindu and Moslem, Christian and Arjya Samajist, Brahman and non-Brahman, all to a common platform and and speak in unison. This is the great task before us. In the interests of our country, I desire that you should realise the implications of provincial autonomy and how it should be worked. I think it would be most unfortunate if instead of a clear cut party system, opportunities were available for the formation of a ministry under a group system. Whether we are in power or opposition, it would be against national interests to encourage or anyway countenance the group system which will work greater havoc than even diarchy. Time and again the cheap criti-

cism is levelled that our Party is sectarian, and while we need not be frightened by such bogeys, I think the time has come when we should, consistently with our policy of equal justice and opportunities to all, admit all those who subscribe to any mental reservations, whatever their community may be. If you look into the past history of our Party, we stood for communal electorates before the Montague Reforms and when these were not conceded we were prepared to accept reservation of seats in joint electorates. Having worked this system for ten years we ourselves have voluntarily stated before the Simon Commission that we did not want any such reservation and that we had organised ourselves sufficiently to do away with such safeguards. The next change when it comes would lead us naturally to the proposal contemplated. I need hardly emphasise the fact that the creed is unalterable. We stand by that creed more convinced than ever before of its essential necessity.

Our ideal is simple—we wish to be in our country what other nations are in theirs, and as Indians, we are determined to rise to the full stature of manhood and carve for our own Motherland a place alike honourable and beneficial to us. That ideal cannot be changed but consistently with that ideal we are prepared to co-operate to work in amicable relationship to extend the hand of fellowship to those who will work in harmony and peace with us alike for the glory of our country and the mutual benefit and prosperity of each other.

#### PRACTICAL REALITIES

But this ideal that we have set before us does not blind us from appreciating the practical realities of the situation, and it is here that our Party can play a large part in offering a sound lead and in steering clear of opposite extremes of conduct. As I can visualise the future the greatest need of the country is unity, unity in essentials, and it is here that we have proved ourselves as practical statesmen. There are other political bodies which have, in the name of unity, created greater discord, produced suspicion and distrust by their pusillanimous attitude and have time and again quite unnecessarily and as unwisely roused feelings of jealousy, doubt and dismay when, with ordinary prudence and human sympathy and understanding, much of this bitterness could be avoided. Revolutions and the dark shadow of terrorism that now stare through a neighbouring province are alien to our soil, to our very religion and culture, and find no place in our creed. If the history of the world is read aright, every one with a vision and with a certain amount of political instinct, will easily realise that no great nation ever attained eminence by such unfortunate methods which are calculated to undermine the best interests of the nation and which are incapable of producing any positive results.

#### FUTURE ORGANISATION

This brings me on to the most important part of my address. This time next year we are all looking forward to the inauguration of great constitutional changes and perhaps we shall be in the throes of a momentous general election, the like of which has not so far been witnessed in India. For the first time a large virgin electorate is to be roped in for political purposes, an electorate which has certainly not been trained to the proper discharge of their privileges till now. Those who are interested in the safe governing of this country and in the constitutional advancement of this presidency,—and I venture to think none are more interested than our own Party—must necessarily take all steps possible to see that the virgin electorate is educated along proper lines, such that they might discharge their duties in the best interests of the country. To get into contact with the greatly increased electorate to find suitable candidates for the hundred and odd constituencies, is not going to be an easy task for us, in the situation in which we are now placed. No country, no party for the matter of that can hope to tackle such great problems without party organisation and without party funds behind it for successfully facing the manifold issues with which we will be confronted within the near future. We should not rest on our oars. I feel that to-day, more than ever, the country needs a party such as our own, to withstand the onslaughts of heterodox ideas and revolutionary thought, and it is as much in the interests of our own party—that I plead for an intensive campaign in the next few months such that when the fruit of provincial autonomy is within our groups, it may not be plucked away by dissipated energies. It is absolutely necessary for us to hold conferences in every district to evolve a programme that will be in the best interests of the masses and to work on such lines.

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# The All India Congress Socialist Party

## SOCIALISTS AND THE CONGRESS

On the eve of the holding of the Indian National Congress at Bombay, a meeting of the leading Congress Socialists was held at Benares, on the 30th. September 1934, Mr. Sampurnanand presiding. Twenty-four delegates from Delhi, Bengal, Bihar, U. P., Bombay, Maharashtra, Ajmer, Central Provinces and Utkal attended the meeting. After lively discussions lasting for six hours, important resolutions as to the attitude to be adopted by the Congress Socialists regarding the Assembly elections and the acceptance of offices on Congress organisations, were passed.

Among those present at the meeting were Dr. D. Silva (C. P.) Mr. B. P. Sinha (Behar), Mr. Masani (Bombay), Messrs. Narendradeva and Sriprakasa (U. P.), Mr. Shankerlal (Delhi), Mr. S. M. A. Joshi (Maharashtra) Mr. Charles Mascaranhas (Bengal), Mr. Asawa (Ajmere), and Mr. Navakrishna Chaudhuri (Utkal).

The meeting sat till 8-30 p. m. and adjourned till the next day to resume discussion on Mr. Gandhi's proposals regarding the constitution of the Congress. It transpired that during the discussion on Mr. Gandhi's proposals, Bombay Socialists who had been to Wardha and had a talk with Mr. Gandhi, conveyed to the meeting Mr. Gandhi's message. It was stated Mr. Gandhi might press his proposal regarding the restricting of the number of delegates to the Indian National Congress, but he was not going to press his proposals in connection with compulsory spinning and creed. In view of this assurance, some members thought that Mr. Gandhi's statement should not be considered but after some discussion it was decided to give expression to the Socialist views on it and a committee of three members was appointed to draft a resolution for consideration on the next day.

### RESOLUTIONS

The following, among other resolutions, were passed :—

"The meeting of delegates of the Provincial Congress Socialists' Parties is of opinion that the present parliamentary activity of the Congress, in contesting the elections to the Legislative Assembly, is not of such a nature as to intensify or further the struggle for National Independence against British Imperialism. This meeting feels that such activity constitutes, on the contrary, a drift towards sterile constitutionalism, which has already involved demoralisation and compromise with elements, unbelieving either in complete independence or direct action and which is bound to lead to complete abandonment of the struggle for independence and compromise with British Imperialism. This meeting calls upon members of Congress Socialist Parties (1) to decline nomination as Congress or independent candidates for the Assembly election and to withdraw their candidate, if already nominated and (2) to decline to serve as members of parliamentary boards, central or provincial, or any committees for the electoral campaign.

"This meeting of the delegates of Provincial Congress Socialist Parties is of opinion that no member of the Congress Socialist Party should become an office-bearer of any Congress organisation except (1) where the party is in a majority, or (2) where the organisation concerned has resolved to carry out the Party's immediate programme of the All-India Congress Socialist Party and the Socialist Party gives previous permission to accept office and calls upon those Congress Socialists, who are office-bearers in any Congress organisation, except such as those indicated above, to resign their offices.

"This meeting of the delegates of Provincial Congress Socialist Parties condemns the formation of the so-called Nationalist Party on the issue of the Communal Award as communalist and anti-national and thus started a futile controversy over an issue, which is of no importance to the masses and distracted attention from the real task of their emancipation from exploitation. This meeting is of opinion that all attempts to solve the communal problem has been, on the whole, on the



false basis of recognition of rights belonging to religious groups and this meeting is of opinion that the problem can effectively be liquidated only by clarifying the struggle for the economic emancipation of the masses.

"This meeting of the delegates of Provincial Congress Socialist Parties is of opinion that the resolutions passed by the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress at Bombay and later at Benares concerning class war and the advocacy of the confiscation of property are uncalled for and misleading. This meeting claims that class war and advocacy of confiscation of property are not inconsistent, in any way, with the Congress creed."

### Second Day—1st. October—Gandiji's Proposals

The Committee which was appointed last night in this connection reported to the meeting this morning that it was unnecessary to discuss Mr. Gandhi's proposals in view of the information received regarding Mr. Gandhi's intentions. Eventually, consideration of the proposals was dropped. According to private talks in Socialists' circles it appears certain that Mr. Gandhi does not now intend to press his proposals regarding the yarn franchise and the Congress creed in the forthcoming Bombay session of the Indian Congress.

The meeting strongly condemned the spirit and action of the Reception Committee of the Indian Congress in refusing the Congress pandal for the use of the All-India Congress Socialist Conference.

## GUJRAT CONGRESS SOCIALIST PARTY

The Gujarat Congress Socialist Party at a meeting held at Ahmedabad on the 2nd. October 1934 passed resolutions condemning the activities of the Congress Parliamentary Board and the Nationalist Party, as according to them it involved a compromise with the Imperialist Government and indifference to the true interests of the workers and peasants. Another resolution condemned the repressive policy of the Government and the Khadi franchise in the Congress constitution, as preventing peasants and workers from joining the Congress.

## ANDHRA CONGRESS SOCIALIST PARTY

The Working Committee of the Andhra Provincial Congress Socialist Party met at Ongole on the 9th. October 1934, with *Mr. B. S. Rangasayi*, President, in the chair. Messrs Ranga, Sheikh Galib Saheb, J. Ramalingaiah and Dr. K. L. Narasimha Rao. etc. were among those present.

The Committee passed by a majority a resolution to the effect that having considered the Benares resolution of the All-India Congress Socialist Party Working Committee, this Committee resolved that such of its members, as had been set up for the Assembly or local legislatures or local bodies should continue to discharge their functions and duties as such, and try to propagate the fundamental principles of socialism through those bodies.

## DELHI CONGRESS SOCIALIST PARTY

At a meeting of the Working Committee of the Provincial Socialist Party, held at Delhi on the 6th. October 1934 under the presidentship of *Professor Indra*, the following among other resolutions, were passed :—

Resolved that as the resolutions passed at the Benares Conference were of a recommendatory nature for the Bombay session that no action be taken on the resolution regarding the holding of offices in any Congress organisation till the Bombay session.

Resolved that the Socialist Party as a party should take no part in the Assembly election campaign, but individual members will be free to take part in the election campaign of the Parliamentary Board.

# The All India Socialist Conference

The open session of the All-India Socialist Conference was held on the 21st October 1934, at 3 p. m. at Ready Money Terrace, Worli, Bombay.

About 150 delegates from all parts of India attended, including Dr. Ram Manohar Lal Lohia and Mr. Mascareñas of Bengal, Mr. F. H. Ansari of Delhi, Mr. Jaiprakash Narain of Behar, Swami Sompurnanand and Mr. Mohanlal Gautam of the United Provinces, Dr. Karnik of Poona, Mr. J. Mukherjee of Allahabad, Mr. P. K. Pillai of Madras, Mr. A. Pattawardhan of Maharashtra and Mr. S. A. Brelvi, Mr. M. R. Masani and Mrs. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya of Bombay, and Mr. P. Y. Deshpande of Amraoti.

The proceedings of the Conference were marked by a novel departure from conventional practices associated with functions of this kind. The Conference had no President elected in advance as is the case with other Conferences and the delegates present were called upon at the outset of the proceedings to elect their own Chairman.

## Welcome Address

Welcoming the delegates to the Conference, Mr. Purshottamdas Tricunddas, Chairman of the Reception Committee, said :—

"During its evolution, the Congress has passed through many a crisis, particularly when the younger or bolder spirits were trying to drag it at a pace which was too fast for the then leadership and although a step forward was sometimes delayed by older hands, it was never prevented. Out of every crisis of the nature the Congress has come out stronger and healthier and more broad-based organisation than before. The Congress is going through one of these crisis to-day. It is this fact which makes our meeting historic.

"We represent to-day the elements who, having fought for nearly three years and having realised the limitations, both ideological and organisational, inside that great body, are asking for clearer understanding of the nature of national struggle so that we may not allow weaknesses which were revealed during the last four years to continue to hamper our march forward. Mistakes are made even by the wisest and most fore-sighted, but is wisdom also to admit and to profit by those errors? An ostrich-like policy of shutting your eyes and pretending that all is well has never done any good to anybody.

As the result of the two struggles, we realised that our failure to achieve independence was not due to any lack of effort on the part of those who joined the struggle, nor to the feeling of tiredness on the part of these workers, as the Congress leaders would fain have us believe.

But to suggest that the elimination of that domination would end our ills and restore to us Ram Raj is a gross misleading of the situation, for the foreign domination might go yet grinding poverty must remain if the transfer of power is to result in the more political democracy.

"It is this realisation that has brought about the organisation of the Socialist opinion within the Congress and is mainly responsible for our meeting here to-day. To those who still hug belief in sentimental appeals as a result of their inability and failure to diagnose the nature of weakness, the Socialists appear to be splitting the Congress. They try to make capital out of this argument and attempt to prejudice the unformed sections of the Congress against the Socialists. They appeal to us sometimes in plaintive terms to preserve the National solidarity.

"The plea of national solidarity boils down to undoing anything which offends against the prejudices of these classes. The Socialists feel convinced that by reason of inevitable and inherent contradiction and conflict between the interests of landholding and capitalist classes on the one hand and the masses on the other, no single appeal which can satisfy both possessing few and exploited many is possible and the Socialists are therefore rightly asking the Congress to choose between the few and many.

"We are confident that the path we have chosen, although calculated to offend certain numerically insignificant classes, is the path which leads us to better understanding of the problem, a path which if followed will make the Congress really and truly an organisation of the nation."

Continuing, Mr. Tricumdas said, "While making it clear that speaking personally, I am not opposed to the utilisation of the Legislatures, I feel that such an activity should be subsidiary to the mass organisation in the country. The Legislatures may be utilised as platforms of propaganda for the furtherance of our activity outside and must be based on a programme which is Socialist in outlook and action. The present parliamentary programme is far removed from this. It is meant to provide a platform to those elements who had hardly ever had strong faith in the method of direct action. Both the programme and personnel of the Congress Parliamentary Board are of such a nature that the acceptance of the Parliamentary policy based on the present programme will mean the handing over of the Congress to forces of re-action. We shall strive every nerve to prevent such a catastrophe. If the present Parliamentary programme is accepted, the Congress will be turning its back on the goal of Independence as a result of the Constituent Assembly which they hope to force the British Government to concede.

"Independence can never come as the result of gift or compromise and if it does it will be of a variety of the Greek gift to Trojans. Independence will only be won by our determination and our strength. This Independence for which we want to fight must be real Independence for the masses. This kind of Independence cannot be achieved as the result of compromise with Britain, because Britain is the bulwark of Capitalism and imperialism. The independence which will result in the transfer of power to the masses must mean, if we are to be honest, complete severance of British connection."

Referring to the task which lies ahead of them, Mr. Tricumdas said: "The work of the Congress Socialist Party will not be confined solely to the conversion of the Congress, the other task is the organisation of workers and peasants."

Mr. Tricumdas concluded, "Our Conference is going to be historic because, it is going to create for the first time within the Congress an organised opinion based on certain principles which unless clearly understood will keep us away from Purna Swaraj wherein there will be no domination of any foreign power, no exploitation of the masses by classes. That we shall meet with opposition, I have no doubt. That we shall have to overcome obstacles which seem insuperable to some, I recognise. But I feel confident that if we work with the goal in front our obstacles and opposition instead of deterring us from our task will add greater zest to our efforts. I also feel confident that unless we lose heart, and I do not think it likely, victory will be ours."

*Swami Sampurnanand*, who was unanimously elected Chairman, did not deliver any presidential address and proceeded direct to deal with the agenda fixed for the day. After the report of the Organising Secretary of the All-India Congress Socialist Party was read, the Conference proceeded to deal with the consideration of the draft constitution and programme of the Party submitted by the Draft Committee, which was accepted with minor alterations.

### Constitution of the Party

The constitution of the Socialist Party as drafted by the Drafting Committee appointed at the Patna Conference, was considered at great length.

Mr. *Batliwala* (Bombay) moved that instead of having the object of the Party as achievement of Complete Independence, it should further be explained by adding the words "in the sense of total separation from the British Empire". He also urged that the object of the party should be the establishment of a workers' and peasants' republic instead of a Society as in the draft constitution. Mr. *Batliwala* explained that the words "Complete Independence" had undergone so many changes in its definition, in the course of the last few years, that it was difficult for any one to define it at present. He, therefore, proposed to make their object absolutely clear by the addition of the words he suggested. His objection to a Socialist society was that such society may be a Socialist State with a dictator. India did not want a Hitler or a Mussolini, but wanted power in the hands of the masses.

Speaking on behalf of Mr. *Jayaprakash*, Secretary of the Drafting Committee, Mr. *Massani* (Bombay), accepted part of Mr. *Batliwala's* amendment by agreeing to all the words "in the sense of total separation from the British Empire", after the words, "Complete Independence". Mr. *Massani* pointed out that the addition of this clause fulfilled completely the object of the mover of the amendment and added that Socialist Society better explained their objective than the amended expression.

After a keen debate, Mr. *Batliwala's* amendment was lost and Mr. *Jayprakash's* amendment carried.

The conditions for membership of the Party *inter alia* stated that the Party shall consist of members of the Indian National Congress, who are not members of any communal organisation or political organisation, whose objects were inconsistent with that of the party. An amendment was moved that every member should subscribe 5,000 yards of yarn annually for membership. The amendment met with considerable opposition, speakers referring to the unfavourable reception given to a similar proposal put forward by Mr. Gandhi himself. The amendment was lost.

By another amendment it was decided that there shall be affiliated to the Congress a Socialist party in every Congress province, including Indian States. The four anna levy for membership of provincial parties was reduced to one anna. It was further decided that disciplinary action against members and provincial parties could be taken by the Executive Council, by a two-thirds majority.

The plan of action as laid down in the draft constitution was accepted with slight alteration. It required the Party to work within the National Congress, with a view to securing its acceptance. The object and programme of the party would be the organisation of and the entry into peasants and labour unions for the purpose of participating in and developing the day to day economic and political struggle of peasants and workers and of creating a powerful mass movement for the achievement of independence and socialism, active opposition to all imperialist wars and utilisation of such other crisis for the intensification of the national struggle, refusal to enter at any stage into negotiations of constitutional issue with the British Government and convening, after the capture of power, of a Constituent Assembly for the purpose of formulating a Constitution for India.

A few minutes before adjournment for tea, a party of Communist demonstrators drove in a lorry to the Ready Money Mansion, wherein the Conference was proceeding, shouting boycott slogans against the Congress Socialists.

The Socialists' Conference adjourned till 18 a. m. the next day. The draft constitution was completely passed, whereafter the All-India Congress Socialist Conference was formally inaugurated. The election of office-bearers was the last item on the agenda, and Mr. *Jayaprakash Narain* was elected General Secretary of the Party.

## Second Day—22nd. October—Resolutions

### ORGANISATION OF WORKERS

The open session of the Socialist Conference met to-day and adopted the resolution defining Independence as India's goal as passed by the Subjects Committee.

The resolution defined clearly what Socialists meant by the expression "Independence":—"Independence must mean the establishment of an independent State, wherein power is transferred to the producing masses and such an objective involves refusal to compromise at any stage, with British Imperialism".

The Conference, after a debate, also passed the resolution defining the fundamental rights as adopted by the Subjects Committee.

The other resolutions adopted by the Conference were as follows:

"This Conference is of the opinion that to enable the masses to appreciate what "Swaraj" as conceived by the Congress will mean to them it is desirable to state the position of the Congress in a manner easily understandable by them. In order to end the exploitation of the masses, political freedom must include the real economic freedom of the starving millions. The Congress, therefore, declares that the future constitution of the Indian State shall be based on the following fundamental principles:—transfer of all power to the producing masses; the development of the economic life of the country to be planned and controlled by the State; the Socialisation of the key and principal industries, e. g., steels, cotton, jute, railways, shipping, mines, banks and public utilities; the organisation of Co-operatives for the production, distribution and credit in the un-socialised section of the economic life; the State monopoly of foreign trade; the elimination of princes and landlords and all other classes of exploiters; the re-distribution of land to peasants; the encouragement and promotion of Co-operative farming with a view to ultimate collectivisation of all agriculture in the country; the liquidation of debts owing by the peasants and workers; the State shall provide work to every able-bodied adult, and social insurance against unemployment, old age, sickness, accident, mater-



nity etc.; to everyone according to his needs to be the ultimate basis of distribution of economic goods; there shall be adult franchise which shall be on a functional basis; the State shall neither support nor discriminate between religions nor recognise any distinction based on caste or community; and the State shall not discriminate between sexes.

#### WORKERS' DEMANDS

"The Conference is also of the opinion that the daily struggles of the workers, peasants and the other exploited masses for their immediate economic political demands are an integral part of the struggle for Independence. The Conference, therefore, resolves that the workers and peasants and other exploited classes should be organised for the immediate realisation of the following among other demands:— freedom of speech and of the Press; freedom of association and combination; the repeal of anti-national and anti-labour laws; the release of all political prisoners and prisoners detained without trial; the instalment of all farmers and peasants deprived of their lands owing to their participation in the movement for national independence; free and compulsory primary education and liquidation of adult illiteracy; drastic reduction by at least 50 per cent in the military expenditure of the Government of India; municipalisation of public utilities; the control of usury direct or indirect; a steeply graduated tax on all incomes including incomes from agricultural sources above a fixed minimum; graduated death-duties; freedom from serfdom and conditions bordering on serfdom; the right to form Unions to strike and to picket; compulsory recognition by employers of the worker's Union; a living wage, 40-hours'-week and healthy quarters and conditions of work; equal wages for equal work; weekly payments of wages wherever demanded; insurance against unemployment, sickness, accident, old-age, etc., one month's leave every year with full pay to all workers and 2 months' leave with pay to women workers during maternity; provision against employment of children of school-going age in factories and women and children in underground mining and hazardous occupations; elimination of landlordism in Zamindari and Talukdari areas; abolition of all feudal and semi-feudal levies on the peasantry; encouragement of co-operative farming: introduction of scientific agriculture indebtedness and arrears of rent, establishment of land mortgage banks to grant cheap credit to the peasants; complete exemption from rents and taxes of all peasants with uneconomic holdings; substantial reduction of rent and land revenue; and freedom from attachment in the execution of rent or money decrees of homestead, agricultural resources and that portion of peasants holding which is just sufficient to maintain an average peasant's family.

"This Conference considers that in view of the international situation and danger of a sudden outbreak of a war, in which the British Empire may be involved, it is necessary for the Congress to declare its opposition to participation by India in any war in which the British Government may be involved and to undertake forthwith the preparation of the entire Indian Nation to resist actively the utilisation of Indian men, money and resources for the purposes of such a war and to utilise such crisis for securing Swaraj.

"Inasmuch as the Indian States constitute a principal political and military support to the British Imperialism and a source of feudal backwardness and reaction, this Conference declares that the abolition of the rule of the Indian Princes alone can assure the complete Independence for the whole of India and invites the people of the Indian States to fight side by side with the people of British India in the struggle for Independence.

"This Conference is of the opinion that no member of a Congress Socialist Party become an office-bearer in any Congress organisation except where the organisation concerned has resolved to carry out the Party's immediate programme of work as indicated in the draft programme of the All-India Congress Socialist Party and the Executive Committee of the Provincial Socialist Party gives previous permission to accept office and calls upon those Congress Socialists who are office-bearers in any organisation except such as those indicated above to resign their office.

"This Conference condemns the formation of the so-called 'National Party' on the basis of the Communal Award as a communalist and anti-National move which has started a futile controversy over an issue which is of no importance to the masses and which has distracted attention from the real task of their emancipation from exploitation.



## COMMUNAL PROBLEM

"This Conference is of opinion that all attempts made so far to solve the communal problem, including those made by the Congress and the position taken up by the Congress Working Committee on the question have been on wholly false basis of recognition of the rights belonging to the religious groups and is therefore of opinion that the problem can effectively be liquidated only through the struggle for the economic emancipation of the masses.

"This Conference is of opinion that the resolution passed by the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress at Bombay and later at Benares concerning the confiscation of property were uncalled for and misleading.

"This Conference claims that participation in class war and advocacy of expropriation of property are not inconsistent in any way with the Congress creed.

"This Conference takes note of the concerted attempts of the right wing to take back the Congress to the old discredited path of constitutional agitation and to convert it into an instrument of the Indian upper classes in their bargains with the British Imperialism.

"This Conference is emphatically of the opinion that these attempts run counter to the creed of the Congress and to the fundamental principles and policies it has been following since 1920.

"This Conference, therefore, resolves to resist these attempts and to rescue the Congress from the hands of the right wing by educating and organising the rank and file on the basis of a clear-cut programme of national revolution and also resolves to carry on a consistent propaganda for the exposure of the reactionary aims, policies and programme of the right wing.

## PARLIAMENTARY ACTIVITIES

"This Conference is of opinion that the Parliamentary activities conducted in the name of the Indian National Congress shall be based on the theory of the revolutionary use of the Legislatures with the following as its essential principles :

(1) The Congress candidate shall go to the Legislatures as the representative of the exploited masses of India and in no other capacity ;

(2) The Parliamentary activity inside the Legislatures shall be closely linked up with the activity of the exploited masses outside, carried on the basis of their immediate economic demand ;

(3) Every issue coming up before the Legislatures shall be approached and dealt with from the point of view, the economic and political emancipation of the masses, forming the only criterion ;

(4) The least betrayal of the cause of the exploited masses shall forthwith meet with expulsion and merciless exposure ;

(5) No selected Congress candidate shall accept Ministerial offices because :

(a) The legislative, executive and judicial machinery, present and forthcoming, is the creation of British Imperialism and is intended solely for the purpose of facilitating and intensifying the exploitation of the Indian masses ;

(b) The acceptance of Ministerial offices will create a dangerous illusion that the Imperialistic State Machine can be utilised for the good of the masses, while its essential structure is so designed as to automatically result in their exploitation ;

(c) A mass organisation that stands for complete independence as its immediate objective must necessarily remain in opposition until complete independence is an accomplished fact ;

(d) The economic and political emancipation of the masses is incompatible with Imperialist and Capitalist structure of the State and society ;

(e) Whereas the decision of the All-India Congress Committee at Patna for contesting the present Assembly election is not on the lines indicated in the past, the decision be rescinded and the Congress candidate be withdrawn ;

(f) This Conference calls upon the Provincial Socialist Party to take disciplinary action against such of the members as may contravene the basis of this resolution.

## REPRESSIVE POLICY CONDEMNED

"This Conference of the All-India Congress Socialist Party emphatically condemns the campaign of repression and terror now being conducted by the British Imperialism in India in the form of special legislation in Bengal under which death penalty can be inflicted for minor offences, a virtual regime of martial law can be

established over the whole districts, thousands of people detained without trial and many other outrages in declaring illegal the Naujavan Bharat Sabha, Khudai Kidmatgars and the Punjab Kisan Sabhas.

"This Conference condemns the action of the Travancore, Baroda, Rewa and other Native States which have taken repressive measures against the Congress, Labour or States' people's organisations and movements.

"In view of the urgent necessity of carrying forward the fight for Independence and preventing the further spread of demoralisation, it is resolved that the Congress Socialist Party shall forthwith commence work with the object of putting its programme into effect, irrespective of the acceptance or rejection of its programme by the Indian National Congress.

"For this purpose, the Congress Socialist Party desires to act in co-operation with other parties having similar aims within or without the Indian National Congress.

"This Conference authorises the Executive Committee to appoint a Sub-Committee to explore the possibilities of joint action on specific issues with the different Labour and Radical Groups in the country.

"This Conference directs the Executive Committee to appoint the following three sub-Committees : (1) Propaganda Sub-Committee, (2) Peasant Organisation Sub-Committee, and (3) Labour Organising Sub-Committee :

"This Conference also recommends that the Propaganda Sub-Committee should conduct the organ of the Party in English as well as in Hindi and publish literature in Socialism.

"This Conference is wholly opposed to the recently enacted Behar Tenancy Amendment Act and condemns the action of the Government of Behar in siding with Zamindars and sacrificing the interests of the tenants."

## THE PUNJAB CONGRESS SOCIALIST PARTY

The newly-formed Punjab Congress Socialist Party held its first public meeting at Lahore on the 11th. November 1934, to condemn the Congress programme of council-entry. *Lala Broz Chand* presiding.

*Prof. Brijnarain*, the principal speaker, condemned the new Congress programme of council-entry and village reconstruction describing both as incapable of bringing Swaraj. *Prof. Brijnarain* said that Mr. Gandhi's new idea was identical with that adumbrated by the British Fascist leader, Sir Oswald Mosley, who had deplored that the Government of India had neglected the promotion of agriculture and rural industries. Thus both Mr. Gandhi and Sir Oswald Mosley were actuated by the same objective, although Sir Oswald Mosley's objection to the development of large scale industry in India was due to the fact that it competed with the British industry. What was needed was national unity and this was only possible on the basis of economic interests. The speaker added that the Bishop of Lahore had recently suggested in a broadcast, that India could achieve unity by embracing Christianity, but the speaker feared, that at the present rate of progress of Christianity, it would take Punjab 146 years to solve its communal problem that way. The speaker said that Socialism was the message of the day and the National Congress would soon become the Socialist Congress. It was just possible that there might be a Capitalist Congress too, but the "Socialist Congress of the masses" would in the true sense be "the National Congress."

The meeting passed a resolution condemning war and declaring that wars undertaken in the interest of a handful of capitalists should not be supported. *Mr. Ahmad Din*, moving the resolution condemning war, described the observance of November 11 as a day of peace as ironical, because the day symbolised the maiming and killing of millions in the Great War.

## THE BIHAR CONGRESS SOCIALIST PARTY

Important resolutions were adopted at a meeting of the Council of Action of the Bihar Socialist Party held at Patna on the 21st. & 22nd. December 1934.

The Council recorded its conviction that, in order to give effect even to the Karachi Congress Resolution on Fundamental Rights and Economic programme, it is necessary not only to educate the masses in its principles but organise them

into kisan sabhas and labour unions, with a view to put organised pressure on the powers that be for the achievement of these objects and the redress of grievances. Another resolution urged the Congress Working Committee to arrange for a fitting celebration of the "Independence Day" on January 26. The Council also adopted the immediate programme concerning peasants as well as labourers and resolved to organise the party on a proper basis in the various districts of the province. The resolution embodying the immediate programme ran as follows:

The Council of Action is of opinion that peasants should be organised for immediate realisation of the following among other demands: amendment of the Bihar Tenancy Act in favour of peasants and particularly the deletion of its obnoxious features, such as the certificate and salami clauses; freedom from attachment in execution of rent or money decrees of homestead, agricultural resources and that portion of the peasants' holding which is just sufficient to maintain the average peasant family; liquidation of arrears of rent and other agricultural indebtedness; complete exemption from rents and taxes of all peasants with uneconomic holdings; reduction of rent and land revenue by at least 50 per cent; abolition and penalisation of feudal and semi-feudal levies, illegal execution and forced labour; encouragement of co-operative farming and scientific agriculture; taxation of agricultural incomes above a fixed minimum; and graduated death duties.

By another resolution, the Council opined that industrial workers should be organized for the immediate realisation of the following, among other demands: right to form unions to strike and picket, compulsory recognition of unions by employers, a living wage, forty-hour week, healthy quarters and conditions of work, weekly payment of wages whenever demanded, liquidation of debts owed by workers etc.

The Bihar Socialist Party was affiliated to the All-India Congress Socialist Party. Mr. B. P. Sinha was appointed to act as officiating General Secretary.

## THE U. P. CONGRESS SOCIALIST CONFERENCE

The U. P. Provincial Socialist Conference was held at Etawa on the 30th. December 1934. *Seth Damodar Sclaroop*, President, in his speech, dwelt on the international situation and supported the theory that war was imminent in the near future. He said that it was evident from what was happening in the several countries of the world that the last stage of Imperialism and capitalism had come. He drew the attention of the people to the disastrous consequences of war and appealed to them to organise an anti-war campaign throughout India. He thought that for a slave country like India there was no question more important than this. He disapproved the participation of the Congress in the legislatures and said that the Congress Working Committee and the Congress Parliamentary Board should see that the policy of co-operation was not adopted and any Government office was not accepted. He thought that the claim that the Congress represented peasants and labourers was untrue and appealed to the Congress leaders to put before the country an economic programme on socialist lines and organise peasants and labourers. He opined that the J. P. C. Report was not worth consideration and should be rejected totally.

### RESOLUTIONS

The Conference passed the following resolutions:—

"The Conference considers that in view of the International situation, and the dangers of sudden outbreak of war in which the British Empire may be involved, it is the duty of the Congress to declare its opposition to participation by India in any war in which the British Government may be involved, and to undertake forthwith the preparation of the entire Indian nation to resist actively the utilisation of Indian men, money and resources for the purpose of such war and to utilise such crisis for securing Swaraj.

Mr. *Sriprakash*, supporting the resolution, mentioned that while 'Mr. Gandhi recruited soldiers for the British Government during the last Great War. Mrs. Annie Besant agitated that "the war time should be utilised for securing Home Rule for India and she had to go to jail in that connection."

Organisation of peasants and workers was stressed in a lengthy resolution.

The resolution stated that the country's emancipation without the organisation of peasants and workers was impossible and demanded the stoppage of ejection and reinstatement of tenants ejected during the last four years, remission of all arrears in rent, elimination of middlemen between cultivators and the State, i. e., landlords and Talukdars, wiping out debts of peasants and petty zamindars, penalisation for Nazrana Hari Begari concealed rent, etc., hiring wage for agricultural labours, freedom from serfdom and right to strike and picket. The resolution made a number of other demands aimed at improving the economic and social conditions of the workers.

The Conference condemned the action of the Government in imposing restrictions on Mr. Subash Chandra Bose.

The Conference considered the J. P. C. Report as wholly unacceptable. The resolution in this connection stated that the Conference was of opinion that the constitution of the Indian State should be framed only by a Constituent Assembly, composed of representatives of peasants and workers. The Conference also condemned the Government for keeping Mr. M. N. Roy in prison in spite of his serious illness. The Conference sent greetings to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and conveyed its sympathy to him at the serious illness of Mrs. Kamala Nehru.

The Conference concluded the session late at night.

## The Anti-Communal Award Conference

Opening Day—Bombay—25th. October 1934

The All-India Anti-Communal Award Conference met at the Arya Samaj Pandal, opposite the Congress Nagar, Bombay on the 25th. October 1934.

Tracing the history of the Round Table Conference *Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya* said it was a matter of regret and shame that they have been unable to come to a settlement in London on the communal question. Some of them did sign a requisition to the Premier asking him to arbitrate but as the Sikhs and Muslim members did not agree, it was distinctly understood that the proposal was dropped. As such the Premier's decision on the Communal question was not an Award but a mere decision of His Majesty's Government. Proceeding Malaviyji drew attention to the fact that unless an agreed solution was arrived at between the various communities before the new constitution was inaugurated, the Communal Award would be incorporated in it and become part of the constitution. Pandit Malaviya examined the Award and showed how it was anti-national and inimical to the growth of self-government in so far as it sought to create as many as eighteen separate classes. Their duty was therefore clear, namely, to bring about an agreed solution, or failing that to continuously agitate as vigorously as we could here as well as in England against the Award till the Award was changed. The Government based on the Communal Award would be government of one community, whether Hindu or Muslim, over other communities in every province. "Can anybody call that Swaraj? Swaraj is rule by the people and not by one community. But the Award creates Communal Raj in every Province. Is that likely to lead to self-government?" Further, in the distribution of seats, one community had been favoured to the detriment of others. Hindus have been the hardest hit. The Congress Working Committee, by the attitude they have taken, had tacitly acquiesced in the Award. This had to his great regret forced them to-day to convene this meeting, whereas such an important question should have been discussed by the National Congress alone. "I don't despair of getting the Award changed. When I have such a righteous cause now can I believe that this cause will fail? I have no confidence in the British Government or Parliament, but I have faith in the justice of my cause and if, with courage and perseverance, we agitate all over the country and in England against the Award, we shall succeed in the end."



*Sir Govindrao Pradhan*, ex-Finance Member, Bombay Government, Chairman, Reception Committee, welcomed the delegates and in the course of a short speech condemned the Award.

#### Presidential Address

In the course of his Presidential Address, *Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee* said :—

**Origin and History of the Communal Award :—**In view of the controversy of the Communal Award, it will be interesting to know the origin of the Award, from the negotiations in London in 1931, at the time of the second Round Table Conference. A note on the subject issued on the 30th. October 1934 by the Director of Public Information, Government of India said :—

During October and November, 1931, the Second Round Table Conference finished its discussion of provincial subjects and intended to take up consideration of the Central Responsibility. This would have included such matters as methods of election, size of Legislative Chambers, Army and financial questions, external affairs and special responsibilities of the Governor-General. But the Minorities Committee of the Conference had failed to reach an agreement and it appeared that each community was anxious to blame the other for failure and Moslems decided that they could not take part in the discussion of Central Subjects, untill they knew what representation they were to get in the Central or Federal Legislature. For some days, it seemed probable that the Federal Structure Committee would be stultified in consequence and that the whole question of Central Responsibility might have to be shelved. This was an embarrassment to Indian delegates in general and particularly to Hindus and Sikhs.

When the Minorities Committee met once again on November 13, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad initiated a suggestion that the Prime Minister should assume responsibility of giving decisions on the communal issue, "which everyone should accept".

At the end of that particular meeting, the Prime Minister (in the chair) said : "Will you, each of you, every member of the Committee, sign a request to me to settle the community question and pledge yourself to accept my decision that I think is a very fair offer?"

Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri replied, "We are willing on this side".

The Prime Minister continued, "But I do not want any section or any one man. Will members of this Committee sign a declaration asking to give a decision, even a temporary one, on the community question and say that you will agree? I do not want it now. I say will you put your name to it and give that to me with the assurance that the decision come to will be accepted by you and will be worked by you to the best of your ability, in course of the working of the new constitution? I have asked several sections—at least individual—from time to time for that and I have never got it."

The next day a group of delegates led by Pandit Malaviya wrote to the Prime Minister that, with a view to enabling the work of the Federal Structure Committee to continue, they requested him to arbitrate on the communal issue, as affecting Hindus, Moslems and Sikhs. The group added that they would abide by the Prime Minister's decision and would recommend that course to those whom they represented. In addition to Pandit Malaviya the letter's signatories were the Maharajadhiraja of Darbhanga, Mrs. Naidu, Raja Narendranath, Mr. S. K. Datta, Mr. M. R. Jayakar, Dr. B. S. Moonje, Mr. G. D. Birla, Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar and Mr. Barooah. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru also wrote to the Prime Minister, supporting this request and adding that he was prepared to leave the problem of the Depressed Classes and other minorities also in the Prime Minister's hands.

A second group consisting of Mr. Sastri, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, Sir A. P. Patro, Mr. N. M. Joshi, Sir Padamji Ginwala, Sir Phiroze Sethna, Sir Cowasjee Jehangir, Mr. Ramchandra Rao, Mr. Shiva Rao and Diwan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, also asked the Prime Minister to arbitrate and agreed without qualification to abide by his decision.

Moslems offered their support, provided that all other groups did the same. They made it clear, however, that they would not desert smaller minorities with whom they had already negotiated a pact presented to the Prime Minister and recorded as one of the official documents of the Conference. Since the various communities could not reach a unanimous agreement, even in the matter of a request to the Prime



The main political problem before us is how to win freedom for India. It is the bounden duty of all of us to strive to win it. Our opinions and methods may differ, but our object should be identical. It is my considered opinion that the Communal Decision is an obstacle in our endeavours to win freedom. Whether this decision remains or is rejected, we must persist in the struggle for freedom. But as in a well thought-out campaign the general does not march forward towards the goal leaving a stronghold behind in the possession of his antagonists, so it would not be wise for us to advance without a simultaneous and strenuous endeavour at least to weaken, if not to eradicate, communalism.

Referring to the Prime Minister's Communal Award, the speaker said:

One may be curious to know why, before Government gave us any idea of the kind of constitution that was going to be given to us, there should have been such a hurry to give a communal decision. If Government had given us a definite promise of at least Dominion status, it would have been comparatively easy for us to arrive at an agreed settlement. But to us was given first a Communal decision! And it was of such a character that it could have no other result than to set different classes and religious communities—and even the two sexes—by the ear, thus making a joint struggle for freedom impracticable, if not impossible. The Award has side-tracked the main issue. At the same time, it is not possible to tackle the main issue without attacking the side issue of the Communal decision, because the latter lays the axe at the root of national unity. So long as the Communal decision continues to be enforced, it will so vivisection and divide the nation as to make all mass action, all joint action, all national action, impossible.

Referring to the Prime Minister's statement that the Communal Award was made because the Indian delegates could not come to an agreed settlement, Mr. Chatterjee said that Communal controversy was of British parentage.

The British rulers being thus, in part at least, responsible for political disagreements among the communities, it was their bounden duty to devise a scheme which would tend to produce agreement among them. This they have not done. The failure of Government's own nominated men to come to an agreement cannot be slightly spoken of as the failure of the communities themselves. Nor were most of them "representative Indians."

In spite of clear indications that all Hindus and an important section of the Muslims are in favour of joint electorates—at least in Bengal—the communal decision was given in favour of separate electorates in all provinces. And why? Apparently because a section of the Muslims want separate electorates. Under the circumstances, it would not be unfair to conclude that the decision has gone in favour of separate electorates, because British Imperialists do not want a united

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Minister, one condition of his consent to intervene was still lacking. But the Minorities Committee itself placed it on record, in its own report, that during the various discussions, suggestions were made that the British Government should settle the dispute on its own authority. These suggestions, however, were accompanied by such important reservations that they afforded little prospect of any such decision, securing necessary harmony in working. But the Prime Minister, as Chairman of the Committee, offered to act and give a decision of temporary validity if he were requested to do so by every member of the Committee signing an agreement to pledge himself to support his decision, so as to enable the Constitution to be put into operation, further efforts for an all-Indian settlement being made in the meantime.

Two days after the Malaviya group sent their original request to the Prime Minister. "The Times" (London) commented as follows: "The limitation of the request to Moslem and Sikh minorities was in the line with Mr. Gandhi's strongly expressed objection to the grant or continuance of special electoral rights to other minorities and in particular his vehement objection to special arrangements for the Depressed Classes. Mr. Gandhi wrote to the Prime Minister on Saturday night that his non-signature of Pandit Malaviya's letter did not mean that the Congress had indicated that it would not approve of any solution acceptable to the three parties concerned, Hindus, Moslems and Sikhs. As to other minorities, Mr. Gandhi was of opinion that their case would be settled by agreement among their representative and other members of the Conference. The Conference could not, Mr. Gandhi said, be reconciled to any further extension of the principle of separate electorates or special reservation of seats."

India, they want a divided India, and also because Britishers in India want a decisive voice in the government of the country by means of separate electorates. What they really care for, above all, is a separate electorate and secure effective voice for themselves in Indian legislatures.

#### DEPRESSED CLASSES

Mr. Chatterjee next refuted Mr. MacDonald's plea for the continuance of separate electorates on the ground that the depressed classes have been regarded by minority communities as an essential protection for their rights. He said that except in Madras, there have not been separate electorates for Indian Christians, and generally speaking, they have not asked for, but are rather opposed to separate electorates; the most important organisations of the depressed classes who by the by are not a religious community by themselves, have insisted on joint electorates; and the foremost leaders of the women of India, who also are not at all a community, have been opposed to separate communal electorates. Yet all these groups have been cursed with that evil thing. Even if Mr. MacDonald's defence of separate electorates for minority communities were assumed to be valid, why has he given separate electorates to the Muslim majority communities in Bengal and the Punjab, where the Hindu and Sikh minority communities did not initiate the claim to protection by such electorates? It is not true and it has not been proved that separate electorates give protection to minorities, or that their interests are promoted or safeguarded when those of India as a whole suffer.

We do not object to the Depressed Classes having any real advantage. What is strongly objected to is their complete or partial separation from the main body of the Hindus. The enlightened and progressive sections of the Hindu community have been making considerable effort to improve the condition of the depressed classes, so that they may not long remain depressed. But Government now in effect declare that all "caste" Hindus, as Britishers call them, are hostile to the depressed classes, or at least indifferent to their lot, and that therefore separate electorates are required for them to protect their interests against the imaginary attacks of the 'caste' Hindus. And Government have also offered inducements to these classes to continue to admit their "untouchability" and to deserve the title "depressed" so as to remain entitled to separate seats. Under the circumstances, "the prospects of improving their actual condition," social, educational and economic, must be poor indeed.

#### REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN

Mr. Chatterjee then examined the Premier's statement regarding representation of Women and said :—

Leading exponents of women's rights never wanted a communal distribution of seats for themselves. Hence separate communal electorates ought not to have been thrust upon them.

Narrating the ruinous effects of separate electorates, Mr. Chatterjee said that in the name of constitutional advance, and in order to get the support of communalists for foreign rule, the free or would-be free citizen's right to vote for a possibly worthiest candidate in his opinion, irrespective of creeds or race, is being taken away, as also the right of that candidate to the support of all voters of all creeds or races who consider him worthiest.

Under a system of joint electorates, to whatever religious community or communities, classes, castes, interests or races, the majority of the members of a provincial council might belong, it could be said that people of all communities had helped to elect them and were responsible for choosing them. So the members also would feel their responsibility to and would and must try to promote the interests of all these groups. But under a system of separate electorates, in some provinces the majority of members would be Hindus elected exclusively by Hindus or, in any case, by non-Muslims and non-Christians, in some the majority would be exclusively elected by Muslims, and in one province, Bengal, the majority would be either Muslims or Muslims cum Europeans elected exclusively by their co-religionists or compatriots. Hence, each province of India would be ruled by a foreign bureaucracy (for British domination would continue) through a majority of legislators for whose election people of all the groups would not be responsible and who would not feel responsible to and would not in consequence ordinarily try to promote the interests of all groups. This would be a highly undesirable state

of things. It would not be self-rule or representative government. It would be rule by people with whose election whole groups of people had nothing to do. The communities and groups also would be inadequately served. Instead of the services of all members, they would be entitled to and would have the services only of particular groups. And the men elected would not necessarily be the ablest and worthiest available. Separate communal elections cannot conduce to the growth of capacity in a community as outside competition is eliminated.

Separate communal electorates with reservation of seats and weightage are opposed also to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's definite pronouncements and to the principle underlying the League of Nations' Minorities Guarantee Treaties.

#### MINORITIES PROBLEM

The Minorities problem in India ought to have been solved according to the principles underlying the Minorities Guarantee Treaties, concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations, of which, both Great Britain and India are Member States and to which, along with Great Britain and other States, India was one of the signatories and contracting parties. India is looked upon as a peculiar and unique country where all that is quite inapplicable which is right and applicable elsewhere. I know India is not a clean slate as regards the Minorities' problem. But neither were those European countries such where the Minorities Guarantee Treaties have been accepted and enforced.

It has been already observed that the Premier's anticipation that the decision is likely to be criticised by every community purely from the point of view of its own complete demands, may put critics on the wrong track. Quite irrespective of whether the decision is just or unjust or partial to this community or group or that, it has been shown that it is a very beautiful one. As regards the demands of the communities, the public have to be reminded and should bear in mind that the Hindu community as a whole never demanded any special rights and treatment for itself. The largest number of religious communities, classes, and interests for which separate electorates have hitherto been formed according to the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, is ten in Madras and less than ten in the other Provinces. It seems, in the opinion of the British Cabinet, constitutional advance connotes further multiplication of watertight electoral compartments. For, according to their new "communal" scheme, there are to be in the Provinces eighteen separate electorates. All these eighteen electorates are not to be constituted in all the Provinces, but most of them are to be formed in most Provinces.

#### CONGRESS ATTITUDE

Referring to the Congress attitude towards the Award the President said:—It was necessary now to consider the Congress Working Committee's position of neither accepting nor rejecting the Communal Decision while at the same time condemning it as anti-national and unsatisfactory. One of the reasons why the Committee has adopted this neutral attitude is that "the different communities are sharply divided on the question." The Congress as a 'national' organisation ought to condemn and reject this 'wholly' anti-national decision in unequivocal terms, even at the risk of having a smaller number of Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh or other adherents. In the long run it is not number but strict adherence to right principles which tells. The main reason which appears to have weighed with the Committee is that if they condemned the decision outright, Muslim Congressmen would have no chance to enter the Assembly. Hence to give them a chance, the Working Committee have adopted a non-committal attitude. I shall be glad if this attitude helps Nationalist Muslim candidates for the Assembly. But will it? In any case, the Nationalist Muslims should feel grateful to the Working Committee for the friendly gesture made towards them by temporary shelving the principle. As the two biggest Mahomedan organisations, viz.; the All-India Muslim League and the All-India Muslim Conference, have supported the White Paper and the Communal decision, the Congress Working Committee's hope of enlisting greater Muslim support by its neutral attitude has not been fulfilled. I am fully conscious that Congress had to tackle a very difficult problem and I recognize that Congress leaders are making sincerely patriotic efforts to solve it. Perhaps an absolutely national solution is not at present feasible. But the solution, which though falling short of the 'fully' national view-point, should be acceptable to the Congress, must possess at least the minimum of the essentials of a nationalistic solution. Perhaps the leaders would cogitate and deliberate to determine this essential minimum.

May it be hoped that this minimum will include joint electorates? Mahatma Gandhi fasted, unto death if needed, partly to bring about joint election of representatives by "depressed" and "upper" class Hindus. But now he appears to be prepared to give up the principle of joint election by Hindus, Muslims and others, for saving or securing the (nominal?) adherence to the Congress of a small number of Muslims. But from the fact that it represents all communities it does not necessarily follow that the Congress can neither accept nor reject anything on which opinions are divided. On the contrary, it is or should be the privilege and the duty of the Congress to find out what is National and to inculcate it, never minding whether that would increase or reduce the number of its adherents.

Mr. Chatterjee accused Nationalist Muslim leaders of a change of front and proceeded to give instances of 'Government's favouritism' in the several provinces. He said that the princes got a very large share of representation.

One of the essential conditions of democratic and responsible government is that what is to-day a minority party may become the majority party to-morrow by the conversion of its opponents to its way of thinking or owing to other causes. But if a constitution makes any religious community, as a community, the permanent ruling majority, there cannot be any democratic and responsible self-rule in the country, and all the advantages of such rule, pointed out above, are lost. The Communal Decision militates against the essential conditions of democratic and responsible government and would, if given effect to, keep India deprived of all the advantages of such government.

The split in Congress ranks over the Communal Decision is to be deeply deplored. The Congress Working Committee's attitude of neutrality towards the Communal Decision was evidently due to its hope—a hope which has not been fulfilled—that would make Muslims friendly to the Congress and lead many of them to join it and also lead Muslim voters to cast their votes in favour of Muslim candidates who were Congressmen.

Some say, if communal electorates and reservation of seats were done away with and joint electorates established instead, the Hindus would occupy the majority of seats in the Central Legislature and the whole of India will be ruled by Hindus as Hindus, 'that is elected by, representing and responsible to Hindus alone.—' There is a serious mistake in such a view. With a joint electorate and general allotment of seats, the elected members will be responsible for the well-being of all, irrespective of their own religious views.

Concluding, Mr. Chatterjee said that true non-religious democratic politics were the only solution for India's ills. He added: Selfish exploitation of the minorities would surely break up the nation and that would bring disaster to all. Though we have been under the British for a long time, we have not yet lost our manhood to such an extent as to agree to being treated politically like slaves who could be forced to change masters at any time without opposition.

One of the main reasons why India is poor, illiterate and unhealthy is that she is not self-ruling. Therefore we should make the greatest possible efforts to win self-rule. Imperial preference (open or disguised), manipulation of exchange and currency, the practical monopoly of shipping in foreign hands, concessions of minerals, etc. to foreigners, the foreign control of our public exchequer and the like make it impossible for the generality of our people to prosper by commerce and industry. Agriculture, generally speaking, is in a backward, pre-scientific condition. The public services and the army, according to the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, find occupation for only one and a half per cent of the people. Begging of communal favours or any other favours cannot make the people at large either healthy, wealthy or enlightened. National Responsible Self-rule is the remedy of remedies. Let us strive for it.

## Resolutions

### COMMUNAL AWARD CONDEMNED

The first resolution characterising the Communal Award as anti-national and undemocratic and requesting the Congress to reverse the Working Committee's decision on the Award was moved by *Sir Govindrao Pradhan* who explained how every expression used in the resolution was put there advisedly.

*Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee*, supporting the resolution, characterised the Award as a novel experiment in politics and said that under the terms of the Award,



Indians would have to enter the Legislatures not as Indians but as Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. He asked the Congress to create more democratic conditions with regard to representation in the legislatures before entering them.

After Mr. *M. S. Aney* further supported the resolution, it was put to vote and carried with acclamation.

'I consider the Congress as more or less a propaganda organisation and not one for considering dispassionately grave questions affecting the country, remarked Mr. *M. S. Aney* with reference to the rejection by the A. I. C. C. of Pandit Malaviya's amendment to the Congress resolution on the Communal Award. He stated that Pandit Malaviya intended to bring the same amendment at the open session of the Congress. He was not disappointed at the verdict of the A. I. C. C., because that was just what was expected. Mr. Aney added that the verdict of the A. I. C. C. in no way altered the situation regarding the Congress Nationalist Party and that election campaign on behalf of the Party will be carried more vigorously than before.

## Second Day—Bombay—26th. October 1934

### WEIGHTAGE TO MUSLIMS

The Conference continued discussion this morning on the remaining three resolutions. After heated debates on the resolutions, two of which centred round the weightage to be given to Muslims, to induce them to accept the principle of joint electorates, on the amendment moved by Mr. *Indraprasad Desai*, a delegate from Ahmedabad, moved an amendment which was passed by a large majority, although stoutly opposed by Dr. *Savarkar*, mover of the resolution. The amendment was to the effect that, provided that in the introduction of the said non-communal role no community should be made to make any sacrifice. The conclusion emerged from this discussion that the House was not prepared to give weightage as the price of Muslims accepting joint electorates. They would rather let Muslims have seats according to their numerical strength.

The League's name was changed to Anti-Communal Decision League instead of Award.

Of the sixteen members elected, Mr. *M. S. Aney*, Sir G. R. Pradhan, Dr. Mukherjee, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, Dr. Savarkar were the only well-known. This resolution was moved by Pandit *Kanchand Varma* who asked the Conference to boycott certain newspapers which write against the Conference. Resolution four, which was moved by Mr. *Aney*, was passed without material alteration.

### OTHER RESOLUTIONS

The following resolutions were also passed by the Conference ;—

"This Conference is of the opinion that the minorities problem in India can best be solved in accordance with the principles underlying the system of protection of minorities inaugurated by the League of Nations which system, according to the declaration of the Chairman of the League Council, has now become part of public law of Europe and of the world.

"This Conference is of the opinion that no form of representation in the Legislature will be acceptable to it unless it is based on non-communal or common roll and uniform franchise irrespective of race, sex, caste and creed, provided that in the introduction of the same common roll. no community should be made to make a sacrifice.

"This Conference is of the opinion that in order to secure the rejection of the Communal Decision and to substitute it by just national solution, it is necessary to carry on a continuous agitation against it and resolves that with that object in view a League here be started, the membership of which should be open to every Indian who is opposed to the said decision irrespective of his political association with any other body by paying four annas and this Conference hereby appoints a Committee for the said purpose consisting of Sir G. R. Pradhan, Mr. *M. S. Aney*, Mr. N. C. Kelkar, Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, Mr. J. C. Gupta, Dr. B. S. Moonjee, Pandit Vijayashankar, Mr. L. R. Tairsee and Raja Narendra Nath, with powers to co-opt."

The last resolution appealed to the Assembly voters in the country to support the Nationalist Candidates who are pledged to oppose the Communal decision and the White Paper inside and outside the Legislature.



# The Hindu Sabha Polity

## THE HINDU MAHASABHA WORKING COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the working committee of the Hindu Mahasabha held in New Delhi on the 28th. July 1934. kidnapping of Hindu girls and women was taken up for discussion first. In this connection the proposal of Mr. C. Vijayaraghavachari was considered. After a great deal of discussion the following resolution was passed : 'The Hindu Mahasabha notes with serious concern the growing menace of kidnapping of Hindu boys and girls and Hindu women in various provinces and condemns it in the strongest terms. It calls upon Hindus in every town to organise themselves effectively to check this evil and draws attention of the Government to this growing evil and the necessity of checking the same by more deterrent legislation and other effective measures.' The committee resolved that a women protection fund be raised for the purpose of taking effective measures and directed that workers be appointed according to available funds and to organise volunteer corps and take other necessary steps in different provinces. It further resolved that Babu Jagat Narain Lal, general secretary, be placed in charge of this work and be assisted by a committee consisting of Dr. Hingorani and Capt. Ramrakhamal and Mr. G. H. Dhandari with powers to co-opt up to two members.

The next item taken up was the Hardwar drainage scheme which the committee discussed.

The working committee of the Mahasabha resumed sitting on the next day, the 29th. July, when it was understood the recent Government resolution regarding the special representation of minorities in Government services was considered. The members unanimously expressed resentment, warning the Government of the consequences.

The committee passed the Hardwar drainage scheme and examined the Behar Relief Fund account. The rest of the time was spent in doing other official work.

The breaking away of Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney from the Parliamentary Board was hailed with jubilation by Hindu Mahasabha circles as 'bold and courageous stand in order to vindicate their honour and self-respect'. The 'Associated Press' understood that a draft resolution had already been partly discussed by the working committee bearing on the subject consequent on Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney's resignations from the Congress Parliamentary Board and the future course of action with regard to Assembly election. The draft resolution, while appreciating the bold and courageous action of Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney, strongly deplored the attitude of the Congress in forcing veteran leaders, like Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney to resort to resignation from the Congress for which they had sacrificed a great deal. Prolonged discussion ensued in the course of which several members were stated to have expressed vehement indignation at the Congress attitude. General opinion favoured the formation of a strong Nationalist party in the Assembly on the lines of the old party led by Pandit Malaviya. The Mahasabha initiated negotiations with Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney, giving their whole-hearted support for this purpose.

The committee passed unanimously a resolution unreservedly condemning the recent Government announcement 'fixing the communal representation in All-India services as this was not only detrimental for the establishment of efficient and honest administration but was also anti-national and sure to perpetuate communal friction'. It was further resolved that a rejection of this Government arrangement also should be made an issue at the election to the Assembly.

## HINDU MAHASABHA ELECTION MANIFESTO

The following is the text of the manifesto issued by the Hindu Mahasabha for the guidance of Hindu candidates in general and of those Hindu candidates who wish to obtain the active support of the Hindu Mahasabha in the forthcoming election to the Legislative Assembly :—

The Hindu Mahasabha has, throughout and consistently, taken up a position which is strictly national on the communal issue. It believes that no form of national responsible self-government, which India is struggling to achieve and which

England is pledged to accord her, is compatible with separate communal electorates or representation in the legislature and the administration, which function for the general good and secular well-being of the country as a whole. It is prepared to sacrifice, and expects other communities to sacrifice, communal considerations to build up such responsible Government which can be worked by a ministry of persons belonging to the same political party, but not necessarily to the same creed, so that agreement on public questions, economic, social and political, should be the basis of communal confidence and co-operation.

The Hindu Mahasabha, however, noted with the deepest concern and regret that the British Government in giving their decision of Aug. 17, 1932, called the Communal 'Award', set at naught the above principles and further completely overlooked the Lucknow Pact, which was an agreed solution between the different communities, and the Simon Commission's recommendations on the problem, because they were fair, impartial and honest and also the decisions of the League of Nations on the question of safeguarding of minorities.

Naturally, since the day of that decision, the Hindu Mahasabha has persistently opposed this Award, and it is determined to carry on the fight till it has achieved its object. In the opinion of the Hindu Mahasabha all the forces which are anti-national and hostile to the growth of the national self-government in this country are concentrated in this formula and, therefore, all the nationalists have got only one duty, and that is to fight against this.

There are a number of organizations which are going to take part in the struggle for the forthcoming elections, such as the Congress Parliamentary Board, the Nationalist Party, the Democratic Swaraj Party, (in Maharashtra) and the Justice Party (in Madras). The Hindu Mahasabha would most willingly cooperate in the matter of elections with any organization that would take a stand on the opposition to and the rejection of the 'communal award'. As, for instance, Dr. Moonje, who has been adopted as a candidate by the Nationalist party, would surely be a candidate on behalf of the Hindu Mahasabha as well, which would do everything to help his success. The Hindu Mahasabha will even go as far as not to oppose such candidates of the Congress Parliamentary Board as get permission from the Board to fight and vote against the communal 'award'.

The position of the Hindu Mahasabha which was laid down in very clear language on March 23, 1931, under the presidentship of Babu Ramanand Chatterjee, is embodied in the following proposition :—

1. There should not be any separate communal electorate, that is, grouping of votes by religion in community, constituencies.
2. There should not be any common electoral roll consisting of voters of all communities and creeds as citizens and nationals of the same State.
3. There should not be any reservation of seats for any religious community as such in the Legislature.
4. There should not be any weightage given to any community as it can be done only at the expense of another.
5. The franchise should be uniform for all communities in the same province.
6. The franchise should be uniform all over India for the Central or Federal Legislature.
7. There should be statutory safeguards for the protection of minorities in regard to their language, religion and racial laws and customs as framed by the League of Nations on the proposals of its original members including India and his Majesty's Government and is now enforced in many a State of reconstructed Europe including Turkey.
8. There should be no question of the protection of majorities in any form.
9. There should not be any alteration of existing boundaries of provinces without examination of linguistic, administrative, financial, strategic and other considerations involved by a Boundaries Commission to be specially appointed for the purpose.
10. In the proposed Federation, residuary powers should rest with the Central Federal Government for the unity and well-being of India as a whole.
11. Differences of religion, creed or confession shall not prejudice any Indian nationals in matters relating to the enjoyment of civil or political rights, as for instance, admission to public employments, functions and honours, or the exercise of professions and industries.

# The Muslim Conferences

## THE ALL-INDIA MUSLIM CONFERENCE AND LEAGUE

A meeting of the working committee of the All-India Muslim Conference was held at Simla on the 13th. August 1934 and after four hours' heated discussion passed the following resolutions which were in substance agreed to by the all-India Muslim League at its meeting held separately. The meeting resolved:—

(1) In view of the fact that an enquiry into the proposals for reforms has already taken nearly seven years, the All-India Muslim Conference considers it of the utmost importance that necessary legislation be undertaken during the course of this year and enacted before the middle of 1935 so as to constitute provincial legislatures before the end of 1935.

(2) In view of the fact that certain public bodies and persons are seeking to reject the communal 'award' directly or indirectly, this meeting of the working committee of the All-India Muslim Conference reiterates its conviction that although such of Muslim demands as are embodied in the communal 'award' and the White Paper are inadequate to afford that measure of protection to the Muslim community which the existing conditions of the country warrant and which have been urged by the conference from time to time, any modification in the provisions thereof affecting these Muslim safeguards without the consent of Mussalmans will render any constitution wholly unacceptable to the Muslim community.

(3) The meeting of the working committee of the all-India Muslim Conference is of the view that Sind should immediately be given the status of a separate province under the existing constitution and that under the new constitution it should have the same status and power as other autonomous provinces of India.

(4) While welcoming recognition by the Government of India of (a) the existing inadequacy of Muslim representation in central services, (b) the failure of the measures of 1925 to afford relief they were expected to give and (c) accepting the principle that minimum representation should be fixed, this meeting of the working committee of the all-India Muslim Conference is of opinion that the Government has failed to protect service interests, justice and fair-play so far as Muslims are concerned inasmuch as (a) it has fixed Muslim representation at 25 per cent. on population basis and not on the basis of their representation in legislatures, that is 33 and 1-3 per cent and (b) further it has failed to make transitory provision to make good the existing extreme inadequacy of Muslim representation and (c) has made no provision for setting up an organization to see that the Government resolution on the subject is properly carried out into effect and does not meet the same fate with which the resolution of 1925 had met. This conference urges that it should be made the duty of a special officer to examine how far these orders are being carried out and that his report should be placed every year before the Central Legislature in time for consideration of members in connection with budget discussion.

(5) In view of the fact that a vast majority of public servants are employed by provincial Governments and bodies under them, this meeting of the All-India Muslim Conference urges the necessity of fixing proportions of Mussalmans in all grades and branches of services whether under the Government or local bodies in accordance with their proportions in provincial legislatures as the present proportions are hopelessly inadequate.

(6) This meeting of the working committee of the all-India Muslim Conference views with great dismay the differential treatment meted out by the Government to Khudai Khidmatgars (Red Shirts) in the Frontier Province and Congress organizations in the rest of India and urges upon the Government the need of immediate release of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his co-workers.

(7) This meeting of the working committee views with great disappointment the attitude of the Government towards the constitutional advance demanded for British Baluchistan. This meeting puts on record its opinion that the feeling of discontent is every day increasing amongst Baluchies owing to repressive measures

that are being taken by the Government against the inhabitants of that province for adopting legitimate and peaceful methods of action to advance their political status. This meeting apprehends that if the present state of things will continue in British Baluchistan it will no doubt become another hot bed of discontent on the frontier.

(8) The meeting of the working committee of the Muslim Conference places on record its emphatic protest against the policy of the Madras Government in having deprived the Muslim community of their solitary seat in the Madras Cabinet by the appointment of a non-Muslim in place of Sir Muhammad Usman and urges upon the Government the imperative necessity of redressing the grievances of the community by appointing a Muslim in the next vacancy in the Executive Council which is due to occur shortly.

Other business on the agenda included the preparation of a manifesto of the League-Conference Parliamentary Majlis for helping in the election of those who adhered to the aims and objects of the league and the conference. Discussion on this did not conclude to-day when the meeting was adjourned.

The meeting was presided over by Capt Hafiz Nawab Sir Ahmed Said Khan, the Nawab of Chhatari, and attended by Sir Feroze Khan Noon (the Punjab), Sir Muhammad Yusuf, Haji Seth Abdullah Haroon, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, Mr. Ghaznavi, Khan Bahadur Hafiz Hidayat Hussain, Khan Bahadur Syed Abdul Hafiz, Syed Murtaza Sahib Bahadur, Maulvi Ghulam Bhik Nairang, advocate, Maulana Muhammad Shaffee Daoodi, Syed Hussin Imam, Maulana Syed Habib Shah, Maulana Mazhrudin, Syed Raza Ali, Haji Syed Muhammad Hussain, Maulvi Zamiruddin, Khan Bahadur Haji Rashid Ahmed, Mr. Mahmood Padshah and Khan Bahadur Haji Rahim Bux (working secretary). Among others present were Begum Shah Nawaz, Sir Muhammad Yakub, Khan Bahadur Niaz Qutub Maqbul Mahood, Nawabzada Khurshed Ali Khan, Mr. Raghieb Ahsan, Khan Sahib Farazand Ali, Syed Ajmad Ali, Muhammad Siddiq Multani, Khan Sahib S. M. Abdullah and Mr. Muhammad Yamin Khan.

## THE ALL INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE

A meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League was held at Simla on the 12th. & 13th. August 1934. The hon. *Syed Raza Ali* was in chair. The league passed a number of resolutions which included :—

The League views with great concern the economic, social and political position of the Arabs in Palestine. It is convinced that expropriation from land of the people of the soil is unjust and dangerous to the future peace of the country. In the opinion of the meeting any further immigration of Jews on any plea whatever is bound to aggravate the already intolerable situation.

Another resolution asked the Government to appoint 25 per cent. of Mussalmans in all branches of the railway services and further requested the Government to have a Muslim member on the Railway Board.

The third resolution appreciated the services rendered by its ex-secretary Sir Muhammad Yakub, as a member of the Lothian Committee, railway statutory conference and by his constant advocacy of the Muslim cause.

More than 35 members attended the meeting and prominent among those present were the Nawab of Chhattari, Sir Mohammad Yakub, Mr. Yusuf Ali, Mr. Husain Imam, Nawab Sir Muhammad Yusuf, Begum Shah Nawaz, Nawabzada Kourshaidali Khan, Sir Feroze Khan Noon, and Khan Bahadur Hafiz Hidayat Hussain (secretary of the Muslim League).

## THE ALL INDIA MUSLIM CONFERENCE

At a meeting of the working committee of the All-India Muslim Conference held at Aligarh on the 23rd. December 1934 under the presidentship of the *Nawab of Chhatari*, the following resolutions were passed :—

The working committee of the All-India Muslim Conference places on record its considered opinion that the constitutional advance proposed by the Joint Parliamentary Committee is as a whole disappointing and falls considerably short of the aspirations of the people of India and shows that it has been conceived in a spirit



of distrust of the Indian people and is in some respects retrograde even as compared with the White Paper.

The committee regrets to find that due weight has not been given by the Joint Parliamentary Committee to the recommendations made by the British Indian delegation and urges that the proposed constitution be improved in the light of the said memorandum.

The committee notes with satisfaction that the communal award has been incorporated in the J. P. C. report, which, in the absence of any agreed settlement, forms the only working basis of co-operation amongst the communities. The committee strongly deprecates all efforts from any quarters to upset the same.

The working committee regrets that the J. P. C. report does not concede the minimum demands of the community as embodied in the various resolutions of the All-India Muslim Conference.

In view of the conditions prevailing in the country the working committee is of opinion that, in spite of the proposed constitution being unsatisfactory, the best course for Indians is not to reject the reforms but to make united efforts to attain full responsible government.

## THE BENGAL MUSLIM YOUTH CONFERENCE

Opening the All-Bengal Muslim Young Men's Conference held in Calcutta on the 6th. October 1934 Sir *Abdur Rahim* referred to the recent Conservative Conference in England and said that its decision indicated that the present British Government might be compelled to reconsider the very modest proposal contained in the White Paper for the constitutional advancement of India. He regretted division among Indians themselves and deplored the fact that eminent public men like Pandit Malaviya should have chosen the present time to force the question of Communal Award upon the country, the result of which was likely to be a disaster in that it would, in all probability, divide the two great communities still further. The attitude taken up by Pandit Malaviya was regarded by Muslims as a challenge and they felt that the question could be only dealt with by negotiations. In conclusion, Sir *Abdul Rahim* asked the Muslim youths to develop the spirit of mutual understanding.

Mr. A. K. *Fazlul Haq*, who presided, urged Muslims to take up the cause of the economic uplift of the masses, with a spirit of grim determination. He exhorted them to imbibe the true spirit of Islam and appealed to them to fill the country with a net work of branch organisations in order that they might have their representative in every village and hamlet in Bengal, charged with the duty of taking note of genuine cases of oppression committed on the people whether by agents of zemindars, moneylenders or the Government.

A gloomy picture of communal strife and jealousy, caste prejudices and racial hatred which might at any moment shatter all hopes of the future of India, was drawn by Maulvi *Fazlul Huq*. Mr. *Fazlul Huq* said : "We are on the threshold of momentous constitutional changes the effect whereof it is difficult accurately to foresee or foretell. Great as our hopes of political advancement are, we can't shut our eyes to the fact, that flitting across our vision of the future, there are sinister phantoms of communal jealousy and strife, of caste prejudices and racial hatred which may at any moment shatter all our hopes as to the future of India."

Regretting the lack of organisation among the Muslims, Maulvi *Fazlul Huq* said : "If we have not made ourselves fit for the changes that are coming we will be pushed to the wall despite all the provisions contained in the White Paper or the momentary Communal Award. The besetting sin of Muslim politics has all along been the unfaltering faith in the sense of justice of the British officials."

### RESOLUTIONS

On the next day, the 7th. October, the Conference adopted resolutions, protesting against the anti-Communal Award. The Lucknow Pact was condemned as a "camouflage for hood-winking the Muslims".

Another resolution called upon the Muslims not to support any candidate for the Assembly who did not vote for Sir *Abdur Rahim*'s amendment to the Army Bill, demanding equal status for Indian Officers with the British Officers.

The Conference also recommended to the Government to introduce legislation so that the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor of Calcutta might take place by rotation from members of the various communities.



# Provincial Political Conferences

## The Tamil Nadu Provincial Conference

The 36th Session of the Tamil Nadu Provincial Conference was held at Coimbatore on the 29th. September 1934 under the presidency of *Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar*.

### Welcome Address

*The Hon. Mr. V. C. Vellingiri Gounder*, (Member, Council of State and President, Coimbatore District Board), Chairman of the Reception Committee, then delivered his welcome address in Tamil.

In the course of his speech, he said, that some inconvenience might have been caused to them by postponing the conference from the 15 and 16 instant, to this date. He craved their indulgence for the same. The last Provincial Conference was held at Madura four years back. Since then the Congress entered upon the satyagraha campaign and all Congress organisations were declared unlawful and dissolved. To-day they had to resuscitate all those bodies. Besides that as the All-India Congress Committee had resolved that Congress should contest the legislative elections, Congressmen had to carry on intensive election propaganda at all places. In the midst of these arduous duties that they should have accepted their invitation and be present here placed them under a deep obligation.

Many thought that the Congress was defeated in the last Satyagraha campaign. It might be true in the sense that it had not fully realised its objective. When they are working towards a goal every step taken in that direction was a symbol of attainment of the goal. Looking at the courage and the thirst for swaraj that had been evoked in the people, no one could dare say that the last movement ended in defeat or was a futile one.

Coming to the present Congress programme viz., capturing of legislatures; the evils following the lack of a sturdy nationalist party in the legislatures were becoming apparent every day. In the present legislatures Government were able easily to pass any measure they liked. Of course, there were a few men of courage and patriotism even in the present legislatures. But their number was small and was not adequate; unless a big nationalist organisation like the Congress entered the legislatures, it was impossible to form a nationalist party there. Such a party inside the legislature would be able to safeguard the rights of the masses.

### THE CONGRESS PROGRAMME

There was another advantage in Congress contesting the elections. Till now, elections were based on personalities and not on principles or parties. The political consciousness of the people was roused only when elections were based on principles and parties. By Congress participating in the elections, everyone had begun to ask himself, "why should Congress enter the legislature, what is the necessity for it? What are the benefits accruing from it?" Propaganda on these lines was also carried on throughout the country. The result was even the villager in small hamlets were enabled to know what was going on around him and was able to add to his knowledge of men and things. Even if no other results followed, this education of the masses was enough to justify the Congress participating in the elections.

A word about the need for the general public supporting the Congress in this election was necessary. Congress was a great national institution. It claimed in its fold such great patriots and men of sacrifice as Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Abdul Gaffar Khan, Dr. Ansari and Sarojini Devi and a host of others. It was an institution which worked day and night for the liberation of the motherland. For the last fifty years and in particular, during the last fifteen years, it had worked for the country in diverse ways. Even foreigners considered the Congress as an institution representative of the Indian people. If Congress won, they understood the Indian people would have scored.

Even so, if the Congress lost, they might think that the Indian people had lost. Therefore, whatever might be their party differences, it was the duty of one and all to support the Congress in this election and bring victory. If Congress failed to get full support, it would affect the future progress of the country itself. This was not the occasion to talk of differences of opinion with the Congress. There could not be unanimity of opinion on all points. Their resolutions and programmes must be such as could be followed by all. Then only they would yield the maximum results. When there was no difference of opinion on important issues, it was the duty of one and all to forget minor differences and to co-operate with the Congress. They should not allow self-interested persons and reactionaries to create divisions. This was the time to support the national institution and through it to show their eagerness for the country's freedom.

There were some people carrying on a propaganda that the Congress belonged to a particular class and to a particular community and to people wedded to a particular opinion. This was a great mistake. Any class, any community and anybody holding any opinion had the right to join the Congress. They could join the Congress and convert it to their view-point. Every Indian, be it man or woman, was entitled to be in the Congress. Everybody had the scope according to his means to serve the country through the Congress. Khaddar, Swadeshi, prohibition, uplift of depressed classes and the agriculturists' relief, these are the several ways by which service could be rendered.

The question at present before them was the Legislative Assembly election. The Congress Parliamentary Board, after deliberation, had put up candidates on behalf of the Congress. It was their duty to unanimously support them and bring victory to the Congress. They must remember they were not standing in their individual capacity. No one could say that they were not true servants of the nation. Even if they had any imperfections, they must remember they were standing on behalf of the Congress and overlook their shortcomings. Let them support the Congress wholeheartedly and bring victory. Truth would triumph in the end. Sacrifice would not go in vain. There was no doubt in this. Therefore the Congress was sure to win.

### Presidential Address

Mr. C. Rajagopalachari then delivered the following address—

I tender my cordial thanks to Congressmen of all the Districts in Tamil Nad for demonstrating their continued confidence in me by nominating me to preside over this Conference and I hope and pray that I may prove worthy of the trust and fulfil their expectations.

We have to record with deep regret the passing away of one of our finest souls in the death of Sjt. Arni M. V. Subramania Sastriar, who had guided us in the early days of the non-cooperation movement as President of our Provincial Congress Committee. He then showed us by his sincerity, spirit of sacrifice and consistency of conduct what a true satyagrahi should be. He was not able to take an active part in the Congress movement after he was released from prison in the first non-co-operation movement. But that again was a proof of his utter conscientiousness. In some cases, abstinence itself becomes sacrifice. We knew how painful it must have been to the late Subramania Sastriar to be compelled to abstain from participation in a movement which was so dear to him.

The last Tamil Nad Provincial Conference was held at Madura under the presidency of Mr. T. Raghavachari in resistance of the repressive orders of the Government. Let us record our congratulations to those who organised the Conference and proved the spirit of resistance that coercion rouses in self-respecting men.

### UNITED CO-OPERATION

You are all aware of the circumstances under which the Civil Resistance campaign has been suspended and the All-India Congress Committee adopted a constructive programme and resolved on participation in elections to the legislature. I need not reiterate the history of these changes in the Congress programme. Suffice it to say, no dissentient note was raised in this province in regard to the policy adopted by the All-India Congress Committee and the Working Committee of the

Congress. We have been enabled to proceed with the work without any internal conflicts among Congressmen and in this respect have earned the 'expressed appreciation of the President of the Congress. I tender my congratulations and grateful thanks to all the Congressmen in the province for their united co-operation.

We have given no room for complaints such as have been made in Congress elections in some other parts of India, and for this also I tender my congratulations to the Congressmen of this province. But it is not enough that we merely give no room for complaints about evasion of the Congress constitution. We should show positive work in reorganising the Congress on a strong basis all over the province and in increased and sustained efforts to spread khadi, abolish untouchability and to fight the drink evil.

#### IMPORTANCE OF KHADI

The Congress Working Committee has adopted a comprehensive programme of constructive work, in regard to khadi, untouchability, promotion of inter-communal unity, total abstinence, promotion of small industries, and organisation and reconstruction of village life. In regard to khadi, we should note that special emphasis has been laid on efforts to make each area consume its own khadi and each village, if not each family, converting all its idle hours into useful cloth through the charkha and the handloom. The production of khadi should not be deemed a matter of competition with foreign or indigenous mill cloth, but should be realised as an addition to national wealth by the utilisation of time which would otherwise go to waste. The spirit of industry should be cultivated and idle hours automatically converted into cloth so that no question of comparative prices arises. This is the new orientation for which Gandhiji has been pleading.

A general impression has somehow been spread, whatever may have been the cause, that the Congress has relaxed its attitude in regard to khadi and tolerates mill cloth to some extent. This is wholly wrong. The following resolution of the Working Committee of the Congress should be noted—

'Notwithstanding what was done during the civil resistance struggle, no competition is permissible on Congress platforms and in Congress exhibitions; between mill-made cloth and handspun handwoven khaddi, Congressmen are expected to use and encourage the use of only handspun and handwoven khadi to the exclusion of any other cloth'.

If we desire to re-establish a spirit of strength and patriotism throughout the country and erect a strong foundation for Congress strength, we must see khadi every where in place of all other cloth. It is khadi that brightens the atmosphere for Congress work in any place and is an essential condition precedent for all successful Congress effort in that place.

#### SWADESHI

'Swadeshi' does not mean a relaxation of our khadi discipline but a further restriction in the selection of articles other than cloth. 'Swadeshi' refers to articles other than cloth, and means the encouragement of articles manufactured in India wherever they can fill the place of similar imported articles. Here too, Gandhiji's insistence is that the energy of Congress organisations should be conserved for the promotion of cottage and other small industries that are in need of the support of the Congress organisations, and that Congress energy should not be wasted on large and organised industries which can and do stand on their own legs. There is, however, no opposition or antipathy to the large organised industries of our country, because the idea is to conserve Congress energy for those industries that stand in need of Congress help and not any antipathy to those that do not stand in such need. A mother's care of her youngest baby is no antipathy to the grown-up children.

#### HARIJAN 'UPLIFT

As regards untouchability, just as Khadi has been entrusted to the All-India Spinners' Association, the Harijan Sevak Sangh has been organised to be in special charge of untouchability work. While, however, the Harijan Sevak deals primarily with a certain amount of uplift work and administers the funds collected for that purpose, all localities cannot be covered by that Sangh. Congressmen must continue to do incessant educative propaganda and otherwise assist in purging society of this injustice and inhumanity towards a section of our people.

I hold the view that religious equality for Harijans can and should be worked out if we love and wish to preserve Hinduism. To seek to give education to the Harijan population and improve their economic condition is no doubt a worthy aim, but while it may supplement, it will not be a substitute for the need to recognise them as equals with other sections of the Hindu community in matters of religious worship. To give education and wealth and official power and to refuse or delay the grant of social status is to create hatred in place of the contentment of superstition. In seeking to give an equal status in religion and worship even before we can succeed in raising their economic status, we follow the lines of work and reform that Sri Ramanujacharya and others adopted long ago, and which is the only rational line of action.

#### TEMPLE-ENTRY

In spite of my views which accord with Gandhiji's that the key of the situation is in religious equality, it must be clearly understood that it is not the object of the reformers or the programme of the Congress to carry forward any reform through coercion. The Congress is pledged to abstain from coercion in all matters. It will not seek even political liberty through violence, much less will it seek social reform, even if it were possible, through force or intimidation.

The opposition of Sanatanists to the permissive Bill known as the Temple-Entry Bill is most unreasonable, because a bare reading of the Bill would show that no single temple could be opened to Harijans under the Bill unless Caste Hindus worshipping in such temples agreed to it, which again could be, only, if the work of peaceful persuasion had been proceeded with successfully.

In seeking the votes of the electorate, Congress has taken care to eliminate all issues at the ensuing elections other than the constitutional political issue between the Government and the Congress. It has been put beyond all doubt and I believe the vast majority of Sanatanists are satisfied that the Congress is not going to take advantage of success at this election-campaign to claim authority for pushing through any legislation in respect of Harijans and Hindu temples. While the Congress is undoubtedly pledged to the removal of untouchability, it has specifically restricted its present appeal for votes to the political issue and it has neither selected its candidates nor carried on its election programme with a view to temple-entry legislation.

#### CAMPAIGN AGAINST DRINK

As regards the drink evil, the ordinances against picketing are still in force and the Congress having suspended civil resistance, the Congress organisations cannot undertake picketing, but the work of educative propaganda among the people addicted to the evil, which is no less important than agitation no total prohibition of sale or manufacture can and should be carried on within the limits of the law. Local officials may not be as liberal as the law itself, but it is hoped that with patience and tact official opposition or nervousness can be overcome and the full latitude which the law permits in this respect will soon be enjoyed by reformers and Congress workers. I want every Congressman to know and feel that drink is the greatest enemy of the poor man. I want every village to have a body of workers devoted to the abolition of the drink evil in that village. Every Khadi-clad man, whether he speaks out or not, must be a force to save the drink addict from this evil.

The Congress campaign in our province was so closely associated with the anti-drink campaign that with the suspension of the civil disobedience movement it is likely that an impression has been created that anti-drink work also stands suspended. We must, therefore, take special steps to revive and carry on strenuous propaganda short of picketing and make the country once again hum with agitation against going to the liquor shop. It is work on these lines and the spread of khadi that will make the Congress organisation once more alive and strong, otherwise, after the elections are over, we shall again find ourselves in a state of inanition.

I am glad to note a change in the attitude of some people who have been hitherto our bitterest opponents, the "Self-Respectors." There is a very thin line between the two opposites of love and hatred. When people say that extremes meet they give expression to this same truth. Those who say they do not believe in God are often very religious people for that very reason. Many so-called self-respectors, specially the younger people, are turning towards Congress as, after all,



it contains a body of sincere men who seek to act according to their faith and not for the realisation of their personal ambitions. Let us welcome those that turn to us; let us not repel their advances by references to past controversies and oppositions.

The character and conduct of individual Congress workers makes up the real strength of the Congress. Every individual Congress worker should remember this on every occasion, and act as a responsible trustee of the fair name and the moral strength of the Congress. Let us rediscover that idealism which first drew us into the Congress; let us hold truth as the highest possession; let us remember that it is sacrifice and subordination to discipline and leadership that give us all our strength.

#### GANDHIJI'S RETIREMENT

Congressmen are now agitated over the threatened retirement of Mahatmaji. I do not wish to minimise the importance of the matter, but I wish to point out that Gandhiji does not intend to retire from politics when he says he will retire from the Congress nor does he intend to oppose or diminish the influence of the Congress. As I understand the step which he contemplates, it is intended to strengthen the Congress and not to weaken it. It is foolish on the part of anti-Congress organisations to exult over Gandhiji's contemplated retirement or to confuse his criticisms with their own anti-Congress attitude. To understand his mind and his proposal, we should remember the various steps that he has taken in regard to civil resistance. He first suspended the mass campaign and restricted civil resistance to individuals, because he thought individuals may show adequate strength and the qualifications necessary for offering successful satyagraha. Then he suspended individual civil disobedience also when he found the materials lacking for successful individual satyagraha. All these steps were taken without any sense of defeat, but on the contrary in the firm conviction that the nation has discovered more and more of its own strength and thereby really marched forward. The goal, however, is not yet reached. The victory of the Congress at the polls and the parliamentary work undertaken and organised on behalf of the Congress may help to bring about a peaceful and honourable settlement with the British Government but we cannot hope to attain this object or win independence through non-violence unless we are strong, that is, unless we have realised and built up the strength for non-violent resistance.

Mahatmaji is convinced that the present Congress organisation does not fulfil the conditions necessary to built up this strength. He, therefore, wants that while the Congress organisation as it was, may do parliamentary work, it has to be re-modelled to develop the strength necessary for non-violent resistance, that is true satyagraha. Whether the remodelling can be done from inside the Congress or whether he should create a new allied or independent organisation for constructive work such as will satisfy his ideals in regard to non-violence is the problem that is now agitating his mind.

In spite of this desire on Gandhiji's part to reform the Congress and his remarks about its present weaknesses, let me recall what he had said about the Congress as compared to other political organisations.

"In spite of all I have said, the Congress still remains in my estimation the most powerful and most representative organisation in the country. It has a history of uninterrupted noble service and self-sacrifice from its inception. It has weathered storm as no other institution has done. It has commanded a measure of self-sacrifice of which any country would be proud. It holds to-day the largest number of devoted men and women of unimpeachable character."

No one need imagine that Gandhiji is indifferent to the fortunes of the Congress. On the contrary, he continues to take the keenest interests in its affairs as can be seen even from his most recent correspondence with Harijan leaders in regard to the election campaign.

#### GANDHIJI'S PROPOSALS

No serious objections have been raised to Gandhiji's proposals in regard to the reform of the Congress constitution except in one respect, namely, the spinning franchise and here opinion is almost unanimous that the spinning franchise would not be workable. It is really unfortunate that this should be the universal feeling. It shows that the political classes have not still got out of the dislike for manual labour or that they have no adequate faith in the message of hand-spinning.



Throughout the world and even in India, there are men and women who believe and agitate that it would be good and proper to hand over the entire Government to factory hands and to the leaders commanding the confidence of factory hands. Everyone who understands actualities knows that though intellectual labour is also recognised as true labour, power in Communist States must be wielded by manual labour alone. If it is good for us and we are willing to be governed by manual labourers, is there anything objectionable in Gandhiji's proposal that all should do some manual labour, little, if not much, and all should strive to contribute to the production of good if they seek to share in the privileges of political activity. What may be objected to, is, that spinning should be the sole form of manual labour recognised. For this Gandhiji has a reason based on Indian conditions and Indian needs, but those who object on this ground may well propose an amendment that everyone whose profession is one involving manual labour should contribute his quota of self-spun yarn to the nation and that those who earn their living through some form of manual labour may simply pay the four anna subscription. I shall not discuss this matter further on this occasion.

I have hopes that a compromise may be arrived at by which Gandhiji may be enabled to form an organisation inside Congress, along the lines that he desires while the Parliamentary and other work may be carried on as at present. There may then be no conflict and no split or retirement but a co-ordinated experiment on the lines he has adumbrated.

#### CONGRESS AND COMMUNAL AWARD

I have stated the case for Congress candidates at the ensuing elections on so many platforms that it is necessary for me to repeat it here on this occasion. I have also issued a separate appeal to voters in Tamil Nad. I shall deal only with one matter here.

It has been urged in many quarters that the attitude of the Working Committee in neither accepting nor rejecting the Government Award on the communal question is illogical. This criticism is a very superficial one. Logic in politics where live human feelings are concerned is not so simple as paper logic. It is paper logic to assume that apart from acceptance or rejection there is no third alternative. If the sons in a joint family approach the father with a claim to partition and submit proposals, the father may not at once either accept or reject any proposal that is placed before him. He may have his opinions, emphatic opinions, as to the merits or objections in respect of any particular proposal but if he is a wise father desiring peace and concord in the family, he does not either accept or reject but seeks to bring the parties together and tries to bring about a settlement by consent. The Congress stands exactly in this position and there is good logic and good human philosophy between the Working Committee's resolution. Congress policy is not one mere verbal declaration. The Congress is a body that is pledged to actions, over and above declarations. Acceptance or rejection by the Congress is not mere verbal condemnation or the expression of its own opinion. Congress may disapprove, but it may have to accept in so far as it proposes to take no action, if national reasons dictate such abstinence from pursuing the matter.

Congress is convinced that to seek the aid of coercion by a foreign Government to make any party submit to either joint or separate electorates would be absurd and futile. Congress is convinced that the British Government cannot be expected to help us with coercion, even if it were possible to appeal to it. What therefore remains is only the method of agreement. In the present state of feelings when even Nationalist Muslim leaders despair of successfully tackling the problem, it is no use raising the issue of joint or separate electorates in an appeal that is confined to the non-Muslim electorate. Agitation among non-Muslim candidates as to the question of joint or separate electorate for Muslims will lead us to no agreement between the Muslims and the Hindus. The Congress, therefore, is of opinion that this question should not be made a subject matter of the present electoral issues, but should be reserved for efforts at agreement whenever the atmosphere is ripe for such attempts. The Working Committee's decision is both wise and logical and it is unfortunate that some Congress leaders could not be persuaded to accept the position and have therefore complicated the electoral issue and weakened the position of the Congress by possible triangular fights. It is hoped that the Congress leaders who have seceded from the Congress electoral campaign will not give room for any untoward results by reason of their non-conformist campaign and that

whoever may be returned will be strong Congressmen and one with the Working Committee in regard to the main issue. We, in this province, are fortunately free from this complication. It is unnecessary to exercise our minds on this issue which does not affect us in this province.

I do not exaggerate the importance of election success, but I am convinced that the country will undoubtedly gain if the Congress scores a good victory in this contest. It is a continuation, on a different plane, of the national struggle. The prestige of the Congress must be vindicated and the repressive measures condemned and the White Paper proposals rejected by the electorate as a whole. The injury and the insult added to it in the tearing up of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact and the refusal of the Viceroy to see Gandhiji when the latter asked for an interview on Christmas Day 1931 must be pronounced upon by the electorate. The electorate should give the only possible answer that self-respecting people can give. I am glad to say that in all the districts through which I have travelled so far, I have found every reason to hope that Congress will secure victory. I appeal to all Congressmen who are gathered here to put forth every possible effort during the next month so as to achieve the fulfilment of this expectation.

## Resolutions—Second Day—the 30th. September 1934

### RELIEF TO RYOTS

*Dr. T. S. S. Rajan* moved that owing to the unjust and heavy land tax and the fall in prices of commodities, the ryots were involved in untold suffering and that if immediate relief was not provided the economic condition of the country would become very much worse and that therefore this conference urged the necessity for the Government to chalk out a programme for adequate reduction of land tax and the indebtedness of the agriculturist. In moving the resolution, *Dr. Rajan* dwelt particularly on the plight of landowners in the Tanjore district who had been hit hard.

### ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

The next resolutions were: "This conference whole-heartedly supports the decision of the All-India Congress Committee held at Patna and the subsequent connected resolution of the Working Committee. The Conference whole-heartedly supports the candidature of the gentlemen who have been nominated by the Congress Parliamentary Board to contest the Assembly seats from Tamil Nad. This Conference appeals to the voters to exercise their franchise in favour of the Congress candidates and thus ensure complete victory to the Congress. This Conference emphasises the necessity to render unstinted support to the six candidates who have accepted the Congress policy and discipline in order to strengthen the Congress in its struggle for freedom and enable it to come out victorious."

All the resolutions were passed unanimously.

### THE OTTAWA PACT

*Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chetti* then moved: "This Conference condemns the Ottawa Agreement and the whole policy of imperial preference for a trade treaty that is going on between the British Government and their agents in India. This Conference recommends to the Congress to lay it down as a general principle that so long as the representatives of India are not able to negotiate freely and on equal terms, no equitable trade treaty between Great Britain and India is possible."

In moving the resolution, *Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chetti* said that the object of the Congress in capturing the legislatures was first of all to enter their emphatic condemnation against the so-called constitutional reforms as adumbrated in the White Paper scheme; secondly, to emphatically protest against and condemn the repressive policy of the Government so far adopted and also to make further repression impossible and thirdly to resist all attempts to exploit the economic, financial and commercial interests of this country. Since the war all countries had woke up and taken steps to protect their economic prosperity as against other countries. Britain had therefore lost her dominant position in trade and commerce. It was Lord Beaverbrook who evolved the idea of a trade agreement between the dominions. The governments of the colonies were of the people and responsible to the people. Whereas in India alone the interests of the Government and the people were not

necessarily identical. Therefore, the colonial delegates represented the people whereas the Indian delegates represented the Government of India and not the Indian people. When the delegates were sent to attend the Ottawa Conference, the Government of India took care that they did not consult the Assembly though the Assembly was in sessions at Delhi. India was trading with all countries in the world practically. In fact her export was more with non-empire countries than with empire countries. What had happened at Ottawa was that all the doors outside the British Empire were closed to India for export of her raw produce. Naturally therefore Britain being the only purchaser of their raw produce could dictate her terms for the produce. So it was that the prices of their raw produce fell down catastrophically. No doubt trade with Britain had naturally increased more than what they had lost with other countries. In fact when the Ottawa agreement came for discussion before the Assembly, every member felt some doubt about the practicability and the profitableness of this agreement for India. The Government themselves were not sure whether India would be benefited by this agreement. Figures and statistics of commerce and trade had demonstrably proved that it was not for the benefit of this country. From the figures published by the British Government itself, except in the case of Canada, no other country had profited by this Ottawa Pact. He would only say then, that India being a subordinate Government to the British authorities, could not enter into any treaty with any other country or even with Britain with a full responsibility for the prosperity of this country. It would be purely a one-sided agreement, and the dominant partner would certainly gain by such agreement.

The resolution was duly seconded and passed unanimously.

The next resolution recommended to All-India Khaddar Sangham to appoint a board to help the Tamil Nad Secretary in Khaddar Management. The next resolution condemned the treatment meted out to a certain community in Madura and Ramnad who had been branded for generations as criminal tribes and denied the rights and privileges enjoyed by others.

The next resolution recommended to the coming All-India Congress in accordance with the Karachi Congress resolution to frame a scheme to enable the agriculturist and the labourer to improve their lot and to earn an adequate wage for their labour, to protect the rights of the ryots in the land and to get a reasonable share of the produce in the land for the tenant-labourer. The resolution was moved by Mr. Santanam and passed. The Conference then came to close.

## THE UNITED PROVINCES POLITICAL CONFERENCE

The 27th. Session of the United Provinces Political Conference was held at Etawah on the 28th. December 1934 under the presidency of *Mr. Sri Prakasa*, who in the course of his presidential speech said as follows :—

Twice before has my desire to come to Etawah in connection with this conference, died in my heart. Three years back, almost to a day, I left home for Etawah. I was sent back from Allahabad. The council of the Provincial Congress Committee was hurriedly summoned there. On the one hand, it was faced with the Government's declaration that the Conference would not be allowed to be held unless we agreed to some conditions which it was impossible for us to accept. On the other hand, it felt bound by the terms of the Gandhi-Irwin settlement ; and did not feel itself authorised, without express permission of Mahatma Gandhi and the Working Committee, to start mass civil disobedience. Mahatmaji was to come back from the Round Table Conference within a few days ; and the Working Committee had already been summoned to meet and discuss the situation. In these circumstances the Council decided that the Conference must be adjourned. Two and a half months later it was resolved to hold 'The Etawah Conference Day', while I was still wondering whether I should celebrate it in Etawah or in Benares itself, the Government decided the matter for me two days before that date. The country has been and suffered much during these three years. Events have also clearly proved what a weak mortal I am ; still you were unwavering in your kindness to me.

Of course, being only human we are all happy that we have been able to meet once more ; but the situation that has made the meeting possible is not one at which we can feel really happy ; and, secondly, when we see that our honoured brother Jawaharlal Nehru and many other comrades are still being held in jail and

new arrests are still taking place, the little happiness that we might otherwise have felt, completely disappears.

#### HOMAGE TO MAHATMA

Allow me to pay our heart-felt homage to Mahatma Gandhi who, whether formally inside the Congress or outside, is our one universally respected leader. It is his programme of work and it is his personality that has given India to-day a place in the world's politics, and it is due to his teaching that our hearts have also felt the determination to give a material shape to the stirrings of self-respect and self-esteem, and we have determined to be free. It would be impertinent on my part to speak either of his greatness or of his activities. Friends have recently doubted the wisdom of his latest programme. He, as you know, has taken in his own hands the great work of village organization and the reviving of village industries. These are most important items of work in the present circumstances of our country, and when Mahatma Gandhi takes up any work he sees that it is done. Many friends think that he should confine himself purely to politics; but he is among those great souls who leave their impress on every department of the world's endeavour. Not only politics but numerous other branches of our national life bear the influence of his personality. If to-day he can solve the problems of our poverty and unemployment and save us from the worse than useless things that are flooding our markets from abroad, he will have solved one of the most important problems of our unhappy lives. Every house-holder to-day is experiencing the fearful consequences of unemployment and one often reads with helpless sadness of suicides of educated youngmen when after all their labours they can find no avenue for adequate livelihood. Let it be remembered that when a man wakes, he does not wake only in his eyes but in every limb of his body; so also when a nation wakes up, it is only in the field of politics, but, in every other field also it feels the pulsations of the new life; and it is essential that its leaders should lead it in every field. To-day Mahatma Gandhi has undertaken a great task and it is the duty of us all to work according to his directions and help our country and ourselves.

During these three years and a half our political situation has grown worse and worse. After the Karachi Congress, Mahatma Gandhi as the sole representative of the Congress, proceeded to England to join the so-called Round Table Conference. This gave this body a prestige which it did not deserve. Truly he honoured the British Government by agreeing to join their Conference: and it was as well that he did so, for he thus showed to the world his and his country's sincere willingness to make peace with honour at any stage. The events that have since transpired are hid from none. Mahatmaji expressed the desire to meet the Viceroy as soon as he came back. But Lord Willingdon instead of seeing him imprisoned him and started a severe repression. This is no time to describe those events in detail: but there is no doubt that official excesses in Bengal and the North Western Frontier Province and the promulgation of an ordinance in our province when we were trying to draw the attention of Government in the most constitutional manner possible, to the sufferings of our peasants, compelled our leaders to start Satyagraha once again.

After the restarting of Satyagraha, in January 1932 the struggle continued unabated for 18 months. Then it happened that owing to his embarking on a long fast, Mahatma Gandhi was released from jail; and in accordance with his wishes the fight was suspended for some months. At the Poona Conference that was then held, another orientation was sought to be given to our fight for freedom. For about another year it continued in its new form when it was suspended sine die. It is not necessary to describe the circumstances in which it was so suspended. To blame others for this is to attempt to hide one's own weakness. But no one needs despair. The national awakening that has come as a result of Satyagraha is in itself a great success. The lessons in fortitude, tolerance, courage and patriotism that the country has learnt and the capacity for organization that it has shown, are the greatest indications that our hopes for Purna Swaraj will soon be fulfilled. In all great struggles there are constant advances and retreats and change of front and methods from time to time. But so long as the love of the ideal is strong in the heart, not the longest half is a defeat.

Along with the suspension of Satyagraha has come to the forefront the question of Council entry. The order has been given that Congressmen are to partake in elections to official legislatures. The time has passed when the pros



and cons of this question could be discussed with profit. Not only those who were ostensibly against it but also those who have actually taken part in the recent elections, feel that these legislatures are no means for the attainment of Swaraj ; but we can never afford to forget that it is always essential for self-respecting people to accept the challenge of the adversary. When it was being openly said that no one had any faith left in the Congress and the challenge was thrown that if Congressmen thought that they had any hold on the country they should come out in the open field of election, then it became essential that we should take up the gage and show to the world that our claim was justified. We know that we cannot stop the Government's high-handedness ; but legislators can at least prove by their opposition that what the Government was doing, was not with their consent, but despite their opposition, and that Government alone was responsible for its action. We cannot afford to neglect this aspect of the question after years of bitter experience. It is some consolation for us that these elections have shown what place the Congress fills in the affections of the people ; and as our president, Babu Rajendra Prasad, has said, it is our duty to see that we do not rest on our oars after our supposed victory in these elections, but that we should take the fullest advantage of them to move forward towards our goal. If the great land-lords or merchants or officials organize themselves to protect their interests, and carry on intensive agitation, it would not be regarded as disaffection of any sort. On the contrary it would be supposed to be so legitimate that it may even have the assistance of Government itself. But if hungry, depressed, unhappy peasants or labourers wish to organize themselves for self-preservation, then it becomes sedition ; and in their action is smelt danger to public peace.

#### THE NEW CONSTITUTION

The scheme of a new constitution has been produced for us after four years of endless rigmarole and futile waste of public money. I am not learned enough to examine in detail the report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee. Neither do I regard this as at all necessary. I only know that the main object of Government is the positive promotion of the general welfare of the people ; and this is the one thing on the consideration of which none of those who are responsible for this report seem to have spent a single moment. Of what use can that constitution be in which this all important factor has been neglected. If this constitution had made us responsible for the country's administration, even without heralding any great and desirable change in the social structure, it could still have had some attraction for us ; but we see that it will only add to our expenditure and make the administration still more top-heavy ; the men in power will become more irresponsible than ever ; the peoples' representatives will have no voice in many of the most important departments of Government ; and the chains of our slavery will be made tighter than ever.

#### GOVERNMENT AND ZAMINDARS

All Governments naturally want that the people should pay with pleasure all taxes that they impose, and that they should obtain for the asking all the assistance that they desire. They should be able to do all they like without any cavil on anyone's part. Can we be satisfied with a situation like this ? Can we leave all those brothers of ours in a condition of utter hopelessness and helplessness, whose labour and self-sacrifice alone supply the world with food and clothing and give us all those conveniences which are regarded as indications of cultured life ? It is in the interest of certain people to poison the minds of many of our countrymen against us. I have no complaint against those who do so, but I have a legitimate complaint against those who surrender their minds to them. Take the zamindars, for example. Suspecting us, they seek shelter in the arms of others. May I ask them what they gain by this and by all the complicated laws that are being enacted to regulate the taking and giving of debts, and incidentally create mutual difficulties between landholders and bankers, to the detriment of both, while the landholding and banking propensities of the Government have full play ? The attack is all one-sided, on non-official professions. I, for one, fail to understand what benefit the zamindari system does to the zamindars themselves. I seem to feel that the zamindar is merely an unsalaried agent of Government for the collection of rents.

Those that are regarded as respectable in our country, like zamindars, are either not able to appreciate the situation or are under such delusion of high-



sounding words that they refuse to see it. In our provinces, in a population of about five crores, there are only about one thousand zamindars who pay a land revenue of rupees five thousand or more, and who are regarded as large landholders. The income is less than the salary of very many Government servants of the higher grades. The considerations I have ventured to put forward above, apply even to them. As for the remaining, over twelve lakhs of small zamindars, their condition is like that of the small tenant and their place is also with him. If our large and small zamindars alike work with understanding and discretion, they will find that their real place is with us; and their real interest lies in that better form of society in which they unfortunately scent danger, and by their opposition to which they are harming themselves.

#### NO CLASS OR RACIAL HATRED

We are not fighting against any class or any race. We are honestly fighting against a bad system; we are no enemies of any individual or any group. We wish ill to none; we desire the well-being of all; and with that purpose seek to serve all; and so in our hearts there is really no place either for anger or for hatred. The great struggle for India's freedom is unique in the annals of mankind because there is no feeling of ill-will even against the very people who in other circumstances and in a fight of another sort would have been regarded as enemies. In fact we are anxious to imbibe the many virtues that the British undoubtedly possess, and many of us cherish fondly our personal affections for many individual Englishmen. Let it be known by those who may be frightened by the activities of Congressmen that Congress stands for all, and that we do not and cannot countenance violence of any sort, for the blood or the wealth of any one. We are definitely out to establish a state of society wherein, so far as is humanly possible, all persons will be dealt with equitably. Our methods must always be peaceful and legitimate; and if there must be suffering in the process, it must be inflicted only upon ourselves.

#### CONGRESS ORGANIZATION

Brethren, do not forget that hundreds of thousands of poor men, well-organized, well-determined, and righteous-motivated, will always be stronger not only in numbers but even in actual total wealth, however poverty-stricken individually, than the few who are supposed to be wealthy to-day. We must see that our Congress organization is constantly and vigorously functioning in every nook and corner of the land, and that all the expenses incident thereto, as well as all the labour necessary for it, are borne by us Congressmen. Let us have hope and confidence in ourselves, as we have courage and the sacrifice, and the field will be ours. Let us not forget that among other things the Congress has also to be a sort of mutual insurance society, so that when our comrades fall or are disabled, the organization could take care of them and their families. So many want to come but are deterred by circumstances; some come with great enthusiasm, but fall back because of the utter uncertainty of the welfare of their dependents if they should chance to be put out of action in the fight; some even unfortunately—and I confess this with sorrow—retire in wrath and bitterness after doing much good work and undergoing much suffering, feeling that there is no one to care for them or look after their dear ones when they are not themselves available. These friends have to be assured; it is but fair that they should be. All this can only be done by the humble and regular contributions from themselves in the nature of a fixed tax, not by raising subscriptions from others by fits and starts. Let the history and the working of the great trade unions of the world teach us a lesson both in methods and in results.

#### MUTUAL BICKERINGS

And will you also permit me to plead with you to avoid, as far as is humanly possible, the most unfortunate and unnecessary mutual bickerings that so often ruin fine work? We are all striving for a society whence we want to eliminate the very causes that divide man from man? Shall we, Congressmen, in our own lives, show that we can not rise superior to the lower element in our nature and that we are pursuing only a phantom? I have been more distressed than I can say at the sight of our best workers ruining themselves by their self-sacrifice, and then jeopardizing the cause for which they underwent that sacrifice by mutual recriminations and imputations of motives to one another. Swaraj, if it means anything,

must mean the Raj, the rule, of those whom we ourselves place in power over us, after having fully tested their capacity to bear the burdens and responsibilities of office by virtue of their merit, their intelligence, their industry, their experience, and their selfless public service. It is really a bad preparation for the coming change, in which election must play the most important part, if we can not ourselves carry on even our Congress elections without leaving a long train of ill-will behind them. I do not intend to dilate on this sad topic any further. A word to the wise is enough. I can only beg of all friends and comrades to close up their ranks, to stop mutual suspicions and jealousies, and to look ahead with mutual confidence and mutual esteem.

#### WHY IS SWARAJ WANTED

Different people have different views as to why we should have Swaraj. Some talk of poverty and some of exploitation; and feel that Swaraj will remove all that. I fear I cannot take a merely materialistic view of our aspirations. I say that even if we were a nation of multi-millionaires where there was no want and no disease, but if we were in the hands of another power and were not ruling ourselves and entirely self-dependent and responsible to ourselves in every way and for everything, we should still want Swaraj. Swaraj for us is the recovery of our lost Soul and not only the finding of our lost health. We want Swaraj because we want to live our own lives in our own way, we want to have the capacity to make our own contribution to world-thought and world endeavour; and to feel and realise that the words 'India' and 'Indian', unlike the case to-day, stand for everything that is noble, and that we too can move about the world as a self-respecting people, as members of a race that is great and free.

#### RESOLUTIONS—SECOND DAY—30th DECEMBER 1934

An appeal for Rs. 50,000 for whole-time paid Congress workers was made in a resolution at the Conference at its second day's sitting held this afternoon, under the presidentship of Mr. Sriprakash. A large gathering of delegates, visitors and ladies were present.

Messages from Mahatma Gandhi, Babu Rajendra Prasad, Congress President, Mr. Bhulabhai Desai, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and other Congress leaders were read.

The Conference characterised the Reforms Scheme outlined by the Joint Parliamentary Committee as worse than the White Paper, which had already been rejected by the country as reactionary. The Conference felt that the proposed constitution would not only keep the country bound in chains of slavery but would make it tighter. The Conference made it plain that the country could accept no constitution which fell short of complete Independence (Purna Swaraj).

A resolution disapproving of Dr. Ansari's statement in reply to the Viceroy's speech, which was passed by an overwhelming majority in the Subjects Committee in the morning, was rejected at the open session to-night. An alternate resolution, reiterating full faith in Independence (Purna Swaraj) and methods of Satyagraha was passed by a majority. The resolution was moved by Mr. Keshava Dasa Malaviya, supported by Messrs. Sampurnanand, Purushothamdas Tandon, Balakrishna Sharma and Sardar Narbada Prasad Singh. An alternate resolution moved by Mr. Govind Vallabh Pant and supported by Mr. Mohanlal Saxena asking the Conference to refer the matter to the Provincial Congress Committee for decision was also rejected. There was heated discussion lasting for over three hours.

The Conference expressed heartfelt sympathy with the people of Bengal and the Frontier Province in their sorrows and hardships.

Mr. Narbada Prasad Singh moved and Mr. Sampurnanand seconded the following resolution which was adopted unanimously:—

"This Conference clearly sees that while on the one hand, the British Government is strengthening its hold upon the Indian States, on the other hand it is giving power to Rulers who are autocrats and can in no way be regarded as true representatives of the people in the administration of British-rule in India. The Conference draws the attention of the Congress and the All-India Congress Committee to this and requests them to establish direct relations with the subjects of States, instead of their Rulers."

A recommendation to the All-India Congress Committee to reduce the Congress membership fee from four annas to one anna so that poor peasants and labourers

may be members of the Congress in large numbers was also made by the Political Conference.

Another resolution based on Socialism was adopted to improve the economic condition of the peasants and labourers.

After adopting certain other resolutions, the conference concluded.

## THE ANDHRA PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE

The Andhra Provincial Conference was held at Vizagapatam on the 30th. December 1934 under the presidentship of *Mr. A. Kaleswara Rao*. A very large number of delegates from all Andhra districts were present.

In the course of his address, *Mr. Kaleswara Rao* traced the last Civil Disobedience Movement and the repressive policy of the Government in crushing it. He referred to their Reforms proposals, as finally emerging in the report of the Joint Select Committee. He then subjected the main proposals in the J. P. C. Report to a criticism from the Congress ideal of Purna Swaraj. He pointed out how the Provincial Autonomy envisaged by the Parliamentary Committee was a travesty of real political autonomy and pointed out in detail, how owing to the special powers of the Governor and the Second Chamber, the Provincial Ministers would have little power and would be mere "dummies".

He then compared "the unreal and illusory Provincial Autonomy that is sought to be introduced into this country with the genuine one prevailing in the six Provinces or States comprising the Commonwealth of Australia," which was conferred a model Federal constitution by the British Parliament in 1900. He analysed the Committee's proposals regarding an All-India Federation and contended that the scheme transferred only the shadow of power to the hand of Indians. He criticised the special powers to be vested in the Governor-General and stated that the restriction on India's financial freedom by the creation of the Reserve Bank and the Railway Board were all intended to safeguard British interests. "The present scheme of constitutional Reforms is evidently designed to prolong the present political, economic and military hold of British Imperialism over India for an indefinitely long time." Continuing he said :—

A word about the prevention of commercial discrimination clause. We want Swaraj primarily to solve the unemployment problem and to rescue millions of our countrymen from abject poverty and helplessness. We want to enjoy the same economic freedom as all free nations possess to bring the whole economic life of the nation including means of production and transport, banking, exchange and currency under the control of the Swaraj Government, eliminating foreign competition and foreign exploitation, and to develop it to the fullest advantage of our nation, making our country economically self-sufficient and creating decent livelihood to every man and woman.

### POLICY IN LEGISLATURES

He then referred to the Congress policy in the 'Legislative Assembly and their demand for convening a Constituent Assembly. Referring to the policy they should adopt regarding the coming elections to the Provincial Legislature, he said—"We shall not regret if the new constitutional Reforms are not passed. If they are passed we reject them as unworthy of acceptance. Does the rejection necessarily mean boycott of the Legislatures that will be formed ?

Not necessarily so. We may boycott them or we may capture them or when we capture them we may keep the seats vacant or carry on mere obstruction or utilise the very legislative and administrative machinery for our own purposes. The All-India Congress Committee will meet in due course and give a clear mandate to the Congress party. But I am expected to express 'my individual opinion on this occasion and I do so with assurance that I shall only follow the decision of the A. L. C. C. or of the working committee even if it be against my opinion. Council entry or boycott is not an unalterable policy of the Congress, which settles its programme according to the prevailing situation in the country. We have seen that when the Congress was away from the Legislatures, the parties who entered them succumbed to the favours and frowns of the Beaurocracy, became their willing instruments and passed whatever laws they wanted. All the Ordinances made by the Viceroy were incorporated in permanent Acts in the Assembly

and the various provincial councils and the economic interests of India have been as it were mortgaged to Britain.

The Congress has therefore sent its representatives to the Assembly to repair the mischief done, to prevent further mischief and to utilise the legislative machinery to the best advantage of the country as far as it is possible to do so. There is no doubt in my mind that the same policy should be continued by the Congress towards the new provincial legislatures. Already the Congress has begun contesting in the provincial bye-elections in our province. Mr. Thevar the Congress candidate has been returned unopposed for the Trichinopoly-cum-Srerangum constituency and I offer my hearty congratulations to him. I am sure that my friend Dr. Mallayya, the Congress candidate for Madras, will succeed. The Justice Party which opposed the Congress during the recent Assembly elections has collapsed and it has not shown any signs of recovery so far and I hope the collapse is final. Elections are expected to be held in November next and we must organise ourselves properly from now. The Legislative Assembly of Madras will have 215 seats all elected of whom 28 will be Mussalmans, 30 Harijans, 8 Christians, 8 will be women including one Muslim lady and one Christian lady, 6 will be labour, 2 Indian merchants, 1 aborigines, 6 Zamindars, 1 University and 116 general seats. The Legislative Council will have 46 elected seats of whom 7 will be Muslims, 3 Indian Christians and 35 general seats. The Congress must set up candidates for every one of the seats and obtain an absolute majority in each of the Houses. About 45 per cent of them will be Andhra seats. I am strongly of opinion that the Congress party should also take up the Ministry if they get a majority in the Legislature for the same purposes as they enter into the Legislature itself. They can use the little influence and power that they get thereby for the furtherance of the National Movement in the country, purify the whole administration including that of the Local Bodies from the corrupt and denational influences that have crept therein, resist the Governor in his exercise of special powers and interference with the Provincial Government and keep up a high standard of progressive and patriotic spirit in the Legislature. There must be a strong Ministry to guide the Legislature on the one hand and to keep the Governor in check on the other. If the Congress does not take up the Ministry selfish and mischievous persons will occupy those offices and they will join the Governor in repressing national spirit and promoting adverse interests in India. The Governor may dismiss the Congress Ministers in the conflict, when the Legislature must make the position of the new Ministers too hot and compel the Governor to restore the old Ministry. If the Legislative Assembly is dissolved, the voters will have to return the same members in the new elections. If the country shows such patriotic fervour, the Government is bound to yield sooner than later and a new Constitution will have to come into existence because continued autocracy is no substitute for democratic Government.

#### SEPARATE PROVINCE FOR ANDHRAS

He then adverted to the question of a separate province for Andhradesa, "a subject which", he said, "was in importance to the Andhras only next to Swaraj. The formation of a separate Andhra Province is absolutely necessary for the assertion of Andhra culture, and for the development of the finer qualities of Andhra individuality to enable the Andhras to contribute their share of culture, character and progress more fully to the Commonwealth of India. More than all it is necessary for imparting the highest education in the mother tongue of the people and for carrying on the Government of the Province in the language of the people when alone there will be real Self-Government. Therefore along with the struggle for Swaraj the agitation and effort for obtaining the Andhra Province should also be carried on. It is stated that the Congress party which is the only idealistic and organised party in this country has neglected the question of a separate Andhra Province during the later years. I do not think it is right. They have got a separate Andhra Provincial Congress Committee for Congress work and have been carrying on all their work on the platform and in the press in Telugu. But as the Andhras proved too patriotic to approach the Simon Commission when they visited India, the Statutory Commission did not recommend the creation of an Andhra Province though the case for it is the best in the formation of new linguistic Provinces in India. The new Provinces of Sindh, N. W. F. and Orissa are formed more to placate the Mahomedans and the Utkal Zamindars though all of them are deficit provinces and will have to receive annual subventions from the central



revenues. I do not mean to say that these Provinces should not be formed but if the British Government are proceeding on justice and merit, the Andhra Province should have been formed first. The Justice Party which has been holding the Ministerial portfolios and enjoying the patronage of the Government ever since the advent of Montagu Chelmsford Reforms has never cared to move an inch in this matter even though they had a special opportunity when they co-operated with the Simon Commission. They are afraid that if the Andhra Province is carved out their party will lose all influence. The Congress Party when it was in the Madras Legislative Council carried resolutions demanding the formation of the Andhra Province once in 1928 and again in 1929 but the Madras Government was against the formation and nothing came out of them. People speaking the Andhra language (Telugu) number 2 crores and 60 lakhs in India of whom 70 lakhs reside in the Nizam's Dominions. The proposed Andhra Province will contain eleven contiguous districts that are now in the Madras Presidency and comprise an area of about 80 thousand square miles which is as big as Bengal (78,000 sq. miles) and nearly as big as Great Britain ( 89,000 sq. miles. ). Its population is 1 crore 80 lakhs while that of Sindh is 39 lakhs, of N. W. F. 24 lakhs, of Utkal 1 crore and of Karnataka for which agitation is carried on 1 crore, of Assam 86 lakhs and of Central Provinces and Berar 1 crore 55 lakhs.

As regards income, the Andhra Province will be financially much stronger not only than the new provinces of Sindh, N. W. F. and Orissa but also than the existing provinces of Behar, Assam and C. P. Let us take the Land Revenue alone. Andhra's Land Revenue will be about three and half crores while that of Central Provinces is two and half crores, of Behar one and half crores, of Assam 1 crore 13 lakhs, of Sind about 75 lakhs and of Orissa about 80 lakhs. Andhra will be thus an extensive, populous and financially self-supporting province, and no valid reasons have ever been adduced against its formation. There are plenty of natural resources that are yet to be explored and utilised in Andhradesa—waste lands, forests, mines and water sources—and unless a sesparate Andhra Province is establised there will not be a Government that will take full advantage of resources and use them for the benefit of the Andhras.

#### RELIEF OF FAMINE IN CEDED DISTRICTS

The Madras Government has been neglecting the Tungabhadra project in spite of persistent demands, and Rayalaseema is subject to frequent droughts. I express my heartfelt sympathy with the people of Rayalaseema who are suffering from a severe famine again this year and hope that the Government and the people will soon adopt remedial measures. I also request the All-India Spinners' Association to open a few khaddar producing centres there and give some relief. The J. P. C. report is making the formation of new provinces more difficult than now by removing the jurisdiction from the Government of India to the British Parliament. I urge that a strong sgitation be immediately revived in all the Andhra districts for the formation of a separate Andhra Province. I hope that all the newly elected Congress members of the Assembly will strongly support the cause.

#### J. P. C. PROPOSALS "UNJUST"

The J. P. C. report proposes to take away some more Andhra areas into the newly formed province of Orissa than the White Paper itself. The White Paper proposals of including Berhampore in Orissa are in themselves unjust and improper. Now the J. P. C. report is still more arbitrary and takes away the Parlakemedi and Jalandra Maliahs, Parlakemedi town and portions of Parlakemedi and Jeypore estates also into Orissa. The whole of Andhra must take a strong and united action in this matter. We should not rest till the proposals of the J. P. C. are set aside and also till Berhampore is restored back to us. Our representatives in the Assembly will do their duty and others carry on agitation in England.

He then referred to the future work in the country and said that there was the Congress Constructive Programme to take up first. He emphasised the need for making Hindi the national language of India and criticised the J. P. C. proposal giving special protection to English. The Congress Party after entering the Legislature should make Hindi a compulsory second language in all schools.

He pleaded for the complete abolition of untouchability and for the starting of Congress organisations in every town and in every village. "As the Karachi Congress resolution asks us to do, the peasants and labourers must be told what power, political and economic, Swaraj will bring to them and how their present



condition of poverty, ignorance and helplessness cannot be remedied without Swaraj. Congress workers must be trained for carrying on propaganda among them. I wish to pay a tribute to the Raminadu Training School started by our friend, Prof. N. G. Ranga, and the splendid work he is doing in the direction. Three months' training classes may be started in every district to give instruction to our workers in the fundamentals of politics and economics and in the work to be carried on in the country. It is high time that the Congress identifies itself completely with the ryots and labourers. Ryots and labour associations must be started under the auspices of the Congress. There is no use of Congressmen starting independent and rival bodies. There are already certain ryots' organisations in Andhra and they must all be affiliated to the Congress. Now that Congress has chosen to enter into Legislatures and carry on work both inside and outside the Councils and will in all probability, take up the ministry also, it will be advantageous for the ryots' organisations to absorb themselves in the Congress. It has to be regretted that no labour organisations worth mentioning exist in Andhra except the Railway Employees' Federation. Labour is getting 2 seats in the Provincial Legislative Assembly from Andhra and it is time that labour associations are organised by Congressmen. The Kuomintang which is the leading political party of China has a special bureau to organise Ryots and Labourers. I want similarly that the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee and its subordinate bodies, the District Congress Committees should establish a separate bureau for the organisation of ryots and labour. The Karachi Congress has passed a resolution that uneconomic holdings should be exempt from taxation and that there should be a general reduction in the heavy burden on the land. Resettlement operations carried on the Guntur and Kurnool Districts have to be stopped. The Government has to remit all the additional tax imposed in the resettlement of Kistna and Godavari District and should also reduce the original taxes to some extent.

Remedial legislation should be passed for the reduction of debt and agricultural banks should help the ryots to clear the remaining debts. Methods must be explored and applied as in Germany and United States of America for the raising on the level of prices of agricultural products. Because ryots have fallen into misery, the economic life of Andhra which is purely an agricultural Province has become completely dislocated. As regards Zamindari ryots their lot is still worse. At a time when feudalism was being swept away by the French Revolution in Europe, Lord Cornwallis and Lord Wellesley established Feudalism permanently in India in the shape of the Zamindari system. The village community which owned from time immemorial every inch of land in the village, including forest and hill, was replaced by the Zamindar who was made proprietor of the village. Ejectments and rack-renting followed. The ryots have lost all rights in forests, waste lands, tanks and other springs of village life. The rights of the Zamindari ryots must be restored, their cist must be reduced and they must be freed from serfdom under the Zamindars."

He also pleaded for Congress organising the Youth and Women's Movement under its auspices. "Congress cannot accept the subjection imposed by Mann on women and should openly advocate complete equality of women in the matter of marriage laws, property, inheritance, social, religious and economic rights." "It is only when every nation in the world, white, brown or black, attains self-government," he concluded, "that the race for armaments will be given up, that wars disappear, that exploitations completely will cease, that a federation of humanity will be established and peace on earth and good-will among men will permanently prevail."

## Resolutions—Second Day—31st. December 1934

### SEPARATE ANDHRA PROVINCE

The following resolutions were passed by the Conference:—

"Notwithstanding the fact that Andhras are agitating for a separate province, the legislature has accepted it and the Simon Commission has endorsed the principles of redistribution of provinces on linguistic basis, and the Andhra Province is financially self-sufficient, a separate Andhra Province is not yet brought into being, this Conference protests against the indifference of the Government and appeals

to the Andhras to carry on necessary agitation for the early formation of an Andhra Province."

The next resolution exhorted all Andhras to assist in every possible way the agitation now being carried on for nullification of the Joint Parliamentary Committee's proposal regarding the southern boundary of the new Orissa Province and to allot a day for marking the Andhras' protest in every town and village throughout Andhra Desa.

#### PROTEST AGAINST REPRESSIVE POLICY

"The Conference strongly condemned the Government's attitude in not releasing Mr. Madduri Annapurnayya from jail, notwithstanding the fact that the Congress had given up Civil Disobedience. The Conference emphatically protested against the Government's continuance of the repressive policy even after the Congress had given up Satyagraha, by still detaining in prison Messrs. Sarat Chandra Bose and Jawaharlal Nehru, by imposing humiliating restrictions on Mr. Subash Chandra Bose, by imprisoning Dr. Satyapal and Mr. Abdul Gaffur Khan on charges of sedition and by keeping Mr. N. G. Ranga, elected member of the Legislative Assembly, under surveillance and having him always shadowed by a police Sub-Inspector and by such other acts.

#### PLEA FOR RESTORATION OF BARTER

"The Conference resolved that in the interests of rural reconstruction and for the removal of the present economic depression, the barter system should be encouraged for easy provision of food and raiment for the agricultural masses. In view of the resolutions passed by the World Economic Conference and the World Wheat Conference, the Conference urged upon the Indian people not to part with their gold but to store it instead of exporting it to other countries, as it was necessary to maintain India's credit with other countries. The Conference requested the Assembly members to endeavour forthwith to carry such legislation in the Assembly as would lessen the burden of the ryots in regard to agricultural indebtedness, by making the maximum rate of interest three per cent and by making creditors who took the ryots' lands in discharge of their debt since the year 1920 to fix the valuation of lands so taken on the basis of the prices of land that prevailed at the time the debt was contracted.

"The Conference appealed to the people of Andhradesa to carry out the programme adopted by the Congress at Bombay, regarding the All-India Village Industries Association inaugurated by Gandhiji, by establishing the necessary organisations.

"The Conference exhorted Andhras to carry out with renewed effort the Congress constructive programme in regard to Khaddar, Hindi, removal of untouchability and Harijan service and prohibition of intoxicating liquors and drugs.

"The Conference requested the Congress organisation and Pracharakas in Andhradesa to carry on propaganda with reference to the correspondence that passed between Gandhiji and the Government regarding the rights of poor people to take salt for consumption in accordance with the terms of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact of 1931.

"The Conference recommended to the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee to start an institution for training Andhra youth to carry on properly national propaganda and rural reconstruction work by imparting the requisite political and economic knowledge.

#### ORGANISATION OF LABOURERS

"The Conference requested the Provincial Congress Committee to undertake as a special branch of its work, with a view to infusing the spirit of national unity and solidarity in the masses, the organisation of the agricultural and labouring classes either as Congress bodies affiliated to the Congress and subject to its discipline and creed and work for their economic betterment.

Another resolution urged the Provincial Congress Committee to take steps to organise volunteer corps in every district with adequate facilities for proper training and discipline.

#### J. P. C. REPORT CONDEMNED

"Whereas the scheme of the future Government of India as set out in the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report does not concede to India at

least the minimum national demand, namely, the substance of independence, while the Congress and the people have been demanding complete independence, but whereas on the other hand it falls far short of even the White Paper proposals which were condemned by the whole country as being reactionary and unacceptable, as clearly demonstrated at the recent Assembly elections, and whereas it is designed only to create and perpetuate dissensions amongst the people and is fraught with mischief, which would facilitate the continuance of the present political domination and exploitation of this country, this Conference is of opinion that the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report should be rejected."

#### SWADESHI EXHIBITIONS AND MILL-MADE CLOTH

"This Conference urges upon the District Congress Committee to see that in Swadeshi Exhibitions organised under the auspices of Congress organisations only Khaddar is exhibited and all mill cloth and yarn prohibited."

#### SOCIALIST PROGRAMME

"In view of the present conditions of the world and transition in political thought and philosophy this Conference believes that for the proper reorganisation of society in a manner conducive to the happiness and well-being of all people, the programme of Socialism advocated by the All-India Congress Socialist Party is the only means and therefore this Conference recommends to the Indian National Congress the adoption of the Socialist programme of work."

## The Madras Political Sufferers' Conference

The Madras Political Sufferers' Conference was held at the Gokhale Hall, Madras, on the 20th. October 1934, under the presidency of Mr. *Bulusu Sambamurti*. The conference was opened by Mr. M. P. Narayana Menon. A large gathering was present. Those present on the platform included Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Srimathi Kamaladevi of Cocanada, Mr. K. Sanatanam and Mr. Chinnaaswami Iyengar.

#### Opening Address

Mr. M. P. Narayana Menon, in declaring the Conference open, thanked the organisers for the honour done to him and said that he did not like to identify himself with any movement which was either against Gandhiji or the Congress. He did not know to which party this conference belonged. But he felt sure of the objective, because the Conference was meeting under the presidency of Mr. Sambamurti. The Conference was called a Political Sufferers' Conference. If one sought pain, he did not think that such a person could call himself a sufferer. If they underwent pain for a bigger end, then they had no right to call themselves sufferers. He did not call himself a sufferer. He felt that no healthy society could be built on the assertion of mere rights. If the members of a society merely insisted on their rights, the society was bound to crumble down. It was only when the members of a society thought of their duties for the good of all, that the society could prosper. He wished that the things which the sufferers wanted, were furnished by society without their asking for it.

Proceeding, Mr. Narayana Menon said that he had always felt that the Congress should have a combatant as also a non-combatant "army." He hoped that the Conference would induce their rich men and leaders to help in the organisation of that "army" by financing it. He would merely hint that the combatant "army" should be organised on the lines of the Salvation Army.

The one thing, Mr. Narayana Menon continuing said, that was engaging their attention now, was the amendments that had been proposed to the Congress constitution. According to him, the Congress should be open to any person who wanted Swaraj for India. The Congress should not take sides in disputes between capitalists and socialists or aristocrats and the masses. The Congress should insist only on getting Swaraj for India. "After we get Swaraj, we shall decide what form of Swaraj we shall have. The Congress may have any number of groups. But they should be in the Congress only on condition that if the Congress as a body decides

that a certain course of action is necessary to reach the main goal, they would support it, subordinating their own views in the matter", he declared.

#### Welcome Address

*Mr. H. D. Raja*, the Chairman of the Reception Committee, next extended a hearty welcome to the president and the members of the Conference. He said that the history of their struggle was replete with many brave deeds ; but they were now without a programme and in helpless condition. They were assembled there just at a time, when there was utter confusion and uncertainty, in political matters. None seemed to have any definite idea as to what should be their next step. This conference was composed of persons whose motto was service and sacrifice and whose demand was unadulterated complete independence for the country.

Proceeding, *Mr. Raja* referred to troubles and difficulties which the political workers underwent in prison and pleaded for better treatment of political workers who might be forced to court imprisonment. *Mr. Raja* then stated that it was only by raising the masses to a better economic position, could they organise their forces to work for freedom. Therefore, they had to adopt a programme in the interests of the masses. To carry out such a programme of work trained workers were necessary. Each taluk and village should have a nucleus of such an organisation of workers. The political sufferers had a right to demand from the Congress entire support for their future activities. A delegation should be sent to Bombay to express the views of this conference. He then proposed *Mr. Sambamurti* to the chair.

#### Presidential Address

*Mr. Bulusu Sambamurti*, in his address, observed that this conference was not the first of its kind. In 1925, an All-India Political Sufferers' Conference was held at Cawnpore. An executive committee was then formed to arrange relief for the sufferers. The name of that organisation was later on changed into the All-India Independence League. That body carried on an agitation in the country stating that the goal should be the establishment of a republic in India. It was also known by the name of Swadheen Bharath Sangha. At the time of the Madras Congress the first Republican Congress of political workers was held under the presidency of Pandit Jawharlal Nehru. Later on this organisation became the left wing of the Congress and fought the Government under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. So there was nothing new about the holding of such a conference. He did not believe that Gandhiji would retire from politics. Political freedom was the very breath of his nostrils. They need not feel despondent over it. He would ask the gathering to bear in mind that the present election campaign was not the main fight. The main fight had been suspended with a view to marshalling all the forces in the country for the struggle for Swaraj, if the Government did not recognise India's right to self-determination.

Proceeding, *Mr. Sambamurti* said that it was the duty of every patriot and well-wisher of the country to help the political sufferers in their attempt to establish a Bureau for giving relief to such workers. Only continuous day-to-day service on the part of the workers would entitle them to relief. Service and sacrifice should be their motto. He hoped that the conference would devise ways and means for a definite programme of work.

The conference then adjourned to meet again at 3 p. m. when the resolutions adopted by the Subjects Committee were taken up for consideration. The following resolutions were passed by the Conference :—

#### Resolutions

"This Conference extends its fraternal greetings to all those who are by reason of their political activities exiled from the country or prohibited from coming back to their Mother-land and pays its respectful homage to all political workers who have suffered in connection with their political activities and offers its heartfelt felicitations to them.

#### DEMAND FOR RELEASE OF "POLITICALS"

"This Conference demands the immediate release of all political prisoners interned, exiled, detained, or transported and strongly condemns the Government of Bombay for having externed Messrs. H. D. Raja, Sripad Sankar and others from the Presidency and demands the cancellation of the orders forthwith.



"This Conference condemns the attitude of the Government in still keeping in jail Mr. M. Annapurniah, convicted in the C. D. movement and sentenced to four years' R. I., and demands his immediate release and deploras that there are still about 50 Malabar Rebellion prisoners in jail and demands their release forthwith.

"This Conference also demands the release of Moplah State prisoners who have been detained without trial for many long years ranging from 15 to 40 and strongly protests against the internment of Mr. Amir Hyder Khan without trial and as such demands his release forthwith.

"This Conference demands the immediate and unconditional release of Pandit Jawharlal Nehru in view of the serious illness of his wife and the immediate release of Mr. M. N. Roy who is ill.

"This Conference strongly condemns the policy of the Government in keeping Andamans as a penal settlement in spite of the popular agitation and in spite of the report of the Commission appointed by the Government to abolish it and is further of opinion that no "political" should be sent to Andamans or anywhere outside the shores of India under any circumstances.

#### POLITICAL SUFFERERS' BUREAU

*Mr. E. Krishna Aiyar* next moved the following resolution :—

"The Conference in order to organise help to national political workers and sufferers hereby forms a Political Workers' and Sufferers' Bureau. The following committee with powers to co-opt is hereby appointed to draft the necessary constitution and run the bureau :—Messrs. Bulusu Sambamurti (president), H. D. Raja (Secretary), M. P. Narayana Menon and B. Srinivasa Rao and Srimati Kamala Devi.

#### PROGRAMME OF FUTURE WORK

*Mr. H. D. Raja* next moved a lengthy resolution regarding the programme of future work. He stated that their political objective could be gained only by economic reconstruction of the country and that therefore there should be incessant work carried on among the masses. The following is the text of the resolution moved by him :—

"This Conference emphatically declares that the immediate objective of our nation is complete national Independence and calls upon the Congress to adopt a programme in furtherance of this objective. In order to absorb numerous political workers in the preparation of the masses for a political struggle, the conference recommends the following programme to be adopted by the Congress forthwith :

- (1) Organisation of peasants and workers all over the country on the basis of their economic grievances with a view to leading them to political victory.
- (2) Establishment of national schools with a view to removing illiteracy among adults and to carrying on intense educational activities on national lines among the people.
- (3) Starting of libraries in places where there is none and organising the unemployed educated youths with a view to engaging them for giving education to others.
- (4) Formation of study circles in order to give political education to workers engaged in political activities.
- (5) Formation of a well-disciplined 'national corps' to engage in full time national activities in order to render service to the public and to establish physical culture institutions to improve the health of the nation.

The following resolutions were also passed :—"This Conference requests the Dhakhina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha to employ the unemployed political sufferers in their organisations and exhorts the public to render all such help as is required by the political sufferers.

#### CLASSIFICATION OF PRISONERS

"This Conference is emphatically of the opinion that the system of classification into 'A', 'B' and 'C' of political prisoners in Indian jails should be forthwith abolished and that a separate class should be introduced for political prisoners as such and that the subscription of four annas for membership of the Congress should be reduced to two annas".

A resolution pleading for the abolition of the clause restricting the right of voting in Congress bodies only to the habitual wearers of khadi was discussed at great length and it was eventually put and lost.



# The Women's Conferences

## The U. P. Women's Conference

*Rani Phulkunwari* of Shercot, who presided at the eighth annual constituent Conference (U. P.) of the All-India Women's Conference held at Lucknow on the 27th. October 1934, in her address said:—

Sisters, No one—man or woman—who goes through the reports of the annual sessions of the All-India Women's Conference, our parent body, can fail to be impressed by the extraordinary amount of ability, enthusiasm, zeal and public spirit which have been brought to bear upon the national work that was undertaken a little more than eight years ago. Which man or woman old enough to recall conditions a generation ago would have dared to anticipate the wonderful awakening that has since taken place among Indian women distinguished by passive virtues more than by dynamic qualities? If there be pessimists among us—and I will candidly own that there is enough in our present situation to justify pessimism—this single circumstance of the diffusion of public spirit among India's dormant women and their determined efforts to qualify themselves to take their rightful place among public workers, should in my estimation, bring cheer to their drooping spirit and hearten them to still more active and still more persistent effort to raise the Motherland to a position of honoured equality among the nations of the world. I am sorry that the organisation of constituent bodies of the All-India Women's Conference has made less progress in our Provinces than in Madras, Bombay and Bengal. We have only four centres of work—Lucknow and Moradabad, Fyzabad and Sitapur. I must here pay a well-deserved compliment to the ladies of Lucknow now for their enlightened work. They have redeemed the name of the United Provinces from reproach. They deserve our congratulations as well as thanks and I offer them both. I am sorry that I have not been privileged to share their public-spirited labours, but in all modesty I would now venture to make an offer for your consideration. I shall be willing and ready myself to undertake a share of the work of organisation in the districts so that we may in the near future be able to point to a record comparable with that of more advanced and fortunate provinces.

I considered whether I could place before you proposals of practical work not hitherto thought of or attempted, but I have found on a perusal of the report of the All-India Women's Conference that nearly every proposal that I could make was anticipated and that the resolutions and the deliberations of successive sessions of that Conference cover a field so vast and comprehend subjects so many and various that I have given up as vain the idea of placing before you any new proposals. All that I can and will attempt to do is to emphasise a few matters which strike me as being of special importance at the present time.

The first is that we should have in these provinces more facilities for the education of the girls. I do not say that the record of Government is one of stagnation or indifference. On the other hand I give them credit for what they have attempted to do and for such progress as has been achieved by dint of their effort and the expenditure of the public money in connection with private effort and philanthropy. But contentment spells decay and it is not our business to be idly content; specially when the work that has been done is so little by the side of the vastly more that is left undone and when other provinces are so far ahead of us to make us ashamed of the backwardness of our province. The numbers of colleges and schools for boys and for girls, the respective numbers of male and female scholars and of male and female graduates and under-graduates, and the relative proportion of public funds made available for the education of the two sexes—all and every of these relevant factors tell a lamentable tale of the utter inadequacy of the effort of both the state and the public in a sphere of national life second to none in importance. I cannot congratulate the Government unless and until they give practical

proof of a more lively recognition of the paramount importance of more rapid progress in the education of girls. The objective evidence of such recognition which alone can and will satisfy us will be not the number of the committees that may be set up or of resolutions that may be passed, but actual recorded increase in the number both of institutions and of scholars and of the public funds, applied to this branch of education. While at this occasion I should like to stress the need of more schools to train women teachers as ably urged by Miss Sarkheswari Agha in a most useful pamphlet on the subject.

I would next draw attention to the practical failure of the Sarda Act to prevent premature marriages. I hold both the Government and public opinion responsible for this disappointing result of legislation from which much was expected. The Government have betrayed an indifference to the enforcement of the provision of the Act which does them little credit, and they plead with an almost unconscious inconsistency regard for orthodox opinion as a reason for their remissness in the performance of an obvious duty and the duty which they have taken upon themselves as a matter of statutory obligation. Having said this, I have no desire that we should excuse ourselves at the expense of the Government. We too, both men and women, have failed to do our duty. We should lose no more time in setting up vigilance committees at all places where a few public-spirited men and women can be got together to interest themselves in the matter, in order to detect and to prosecute cases of breach of the wholesome and moderate provisions of the Sarda Act.

The third and last subject on which I will, if I may, detain you with a very few observations is the status of the women of India in law. That it is most unsatisfactory, still more I think in the case of Hindus than of Muslims, needs I think no argument to convince anybody. All attempts at the elevation of the status or the amelioration of the condition of women are doomed to partial success in the best and to disappointment in the worst of circumstances unless and until women can acquire economic and financial independence. Their right of inheritance should be guaranteed by law and they ought not to be left at the mercy of unsympathetic male relations of deceased husbands in joint families where their respective interests are in conflict. As a preliminary to necessary legislation I entirely agree with the All-India Women's Conference that a commission should be appointed to report upon the subject. I am not persuaded that a merely non-official body not recognised by the Government will produce the desired result, as its recommendations will not be seriously considered by the Government. I strongly urge that All-India Women's Conference and its constituent bodies such as ours, should agitate sufficiently to make it worthwhile of elected members of the Central Legislature to put pressures upon the Government to move in the desired direction. As at present election to the Legislative Assembly are in progress, I would urge that no single woman's vote should be given to any candidate who would not pledge himself to support us in this all important matter.

#### RESOLUTIONS

The Conference passed resolutions urging Government to introduce necessary amendments to the Child Marriage Restraint Act so as to make child marriage impossible, protesting strongly against the existing discrimination in law against the rights of women and demanding that the existing laws should be so amended as to make them just and equitable and that an All India Commission be appointed to consider the means to remove the legal disabilities of women as regards marriage, inheritance, divorce etc and requesting the Education Department of the U. P. Government to introduce compulsory scientific and temperance instruction in the high school curriculum,

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## The Tamil Nad Women's Conference

The Tamil Nad Constituent Conference of the All-India Women's Conference was held on the 27th. October 1934 at the Government Training School at Koilpatti, Tinnevely under the presidentship of Mrs. Nesamani Paul.

About one hundred ladies were present and a group photo was taken before the proceedings commenced.

The President in her opening speech thanked the Reception Committee for having asked her to preside over this session. She said that the women of India should take a more active part in the public life of the country, especially in movements that related to the welfare of women and children. She dwelt on the need for introducing compulsory education for girls and pointed out how necessary it was for the right upbringing of children in their tender age. The women in India had certain disabilities, both social and legal, and unless they organised themselves properly such disabilities could not be easily removed.

#### RESOLUTIONS

A number of resolutions were then passed.

One resolution demanded the removal of the disabilities imposed by the Hindu Law on women, by the Legislature of the country. The repeal of the provision in the Madras Village Officers' Act disqualifying women from holding village offices was asked in another resolution. A resolution requested that women also should be appointed as jurors and assessors in courts of law to aid the judges in the disposal of cases.

That the penalty clauses in the Sarda Act should be made so stringent as to exercise a real fear in the minds of those who break the law and thus prevent the commission of child marriages was the substance of a resolution that was passed.

Other resolutions passed were to the effect that polygamy should be prevented in India among all communities; that there should be a women's section in the Public Health Department and that women should be appointed as Health Officers, Health Inspectors and Vaccinators; that the schemes of education for girls should include lessons in agriculture, home crafts and general knowledge and that the Government should allot larger funds for women's education. An appeal was made to the women to come forward and compete for elections to the local bodies and legislatures.

The conference elected Mrs. M. Chelliah as member of the Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference (Tamil Nadu Constituent). The conference elected ten delegates to the All-India Conference to be held in Karachi in December including the President, Mrs. M. Chelliah, Mrs. Navamani Pillai, Mrs. A. G. Gomathinatan, Akilandathammal, Mrs. K. Lakshmana Rao and Mrs. Shenbagam.

The President in her concluding speech exhorted the women to take more interest in all women's movements so that the condition of Indian women might improve. With a vote of thanks to the President and others the conference came to a close.

## The Madras Women's Conference

*Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi*, presiding over the ninth Conference of the Madras Constituency of the All-India Women's Conference, held at the Senate House, Madras on the 3rd. November 1934 observed:—

We have been meeting these nine years and even more in local conferences and in All-India Conferences discussing and passing many resolutions on educational and social reform, many of which are unfortunately still unfulfilled. Even the possibility of introducing universal primary compulsory education for every boy and girl is still a far off vision, even though a municipal town have introduced it. The Child-Marriage Restraint Act, owing to its inherent defects, is not having the desired effect. Equal rights for women in marriage, in guardianship and adoption of children and in inheritance is still a matter of discussion in British India, even though the Indian States of Baroda and Mysore have taken a forward step. Is there any means of removing the social and legal disabilities that our sisters are subject to?

The answer is, yes! We don't need anybody's help to redeem ourselves from the sad plight that most of us are in. We have a powerful weapon and an instrument for good in our right to vote, if we only have the will, the determination and the desire to use it for our own and for our country's good. It was not in vain that our sisters in the West fought, suffered and sacrificed to win this right. Some

of them even paid for it with their lives because they realised its usefulness for all women whether in the East or West, because they felt that the securing of that right would make woman a human being in the eyes of law and an equal to man and a woman possessed of that right would easily win her rightful and legitimate place in society. Let us, on this occasion, pay our humble tribute to all those pioneers who suffered for the good of womankind, and thank all those good men in all countries who have conceded the just claims of women.

About 4,000 women in our city alone have the right to vote for a representative in whom they have confidence. The test has come. Electioneering is going on this city, and men belonging to other parties would have gone to some of you seeking your votes. Our future depends on our decision. Are we going to vote for a candidate because he belongs to a particular community, because he is influential and rich, because he is your relation or friend or one for whom someone in your house, your husband perhaps, asks you to vote? Remember, sisters, that some of us have got the right to-day to make or mar our future and to promote or hinder our own advancement. Think of the sufferings of the young and old widows; think of the pangs of the child wives and child mothers and the despair and destitution of the hundreds of neglected and deserted wives, of the sufferings and premature death of the young devadasis and non-devadasi girls who are the victims of tolerated and sanctified prostitution. You have to exercise your right with a full sense of your responsibility, as you have to render account to yourself and to God.

The mother in the Home should concern herself in the passing of laws, which means that she must vote for the right sort of people and return them to the councils and the assemblies.

Then coming to the other item of business to-day, I wish to appeal for workers, on behalf of the hungry orphans, the unwanted and the unclaimed and the neglected children, whom the law does not protect against the injustice of their husbands, the widows, the deserted mother with their starving children, old and young, and last but not least, the young and innocent victims of vice, the girls and women who are rescued from a life of disease, shame and horror.

There is so much sorrow, so much suffering and misery all round and so much need for selfless and devoted good women workers. How can we, who command a good and happy home and whom God has blessed with all the comforts of life, with knowledge or wealth and plenty, remain content and indifferent to all the starvation and suffering that surround us? We who are mothers and who love our own children whom we protect with all the care and love that a mother alone can give, have we no feeling for the sorrows of other children who have no parents, no home? The lot of the deserted wives and mothers with a number of children is most sad indeed and their number owing to the present economic depression and unemployment is daily increasing. The husbands and fathers simply desert their families and disappear. Many a mother and many a young wife has come to me with her tale of sorrow and utter destitution.

There should be a well organised school for those elderly women who are past the age of school study, wherein a course in home-keeping, in cookery, in domestic hygiene and sanitation and in care of children, in short, in all the household duties could be taught. From there they could be sent out to good private families on reasonable service terms, through an Employment Bureau, controlled by a committee of women. This is necessary not only to dispel the prevailing notion in the minds of the public and in some of our women that house-keeping and household service and cooking etc., is not a noble profession, but also to meet the existing demand from well-to-do families for good cooks, domestic menials and care-takers of children. Further, the profession of teaching is already full and unless more schools come into existence, even the present number of elementary women teachers will be too many; again the pay of the elementary women teachers is even less than what a good cook gets in our homes. Cooking is an art and a legitimate work of women, and trained women cooks will certainly be preferred to men cooks in families.

A number of young and suitable women may be trained as midwives after coaching them up to the 6th or 7th standard. All this planning is possible only with the help and the co-operation of a number of selfless and devoted women who are touched by the sorrows of thousands of their poor sisters, the innocent victims of either an evil custom or an unjust law (a Hindu husband can easily desert his



wife and may keep another woman with impunity. The law does not punish him but the woman cannot remarry during his life-time and even her maintenance allowance depends solely upon his sweet will and pleasure). Again, we women can do effective rescue work among the young victims of vice and can reclaim them and restore them back to a normal clear and healthy life. We will never be justified in standing at a distance and pointing at them our finger of scorn, because if we women do not forgive our own womankind and if we do not give them a chance to lead a better life, who else will come to their help? Very often you will find on patient enquiry and through investigation that with a few exceptions all these young creatures have been misled or misguided by someone who is the real culprit and who deserves punishment or have been led into the horrible life by force of circumstances or have not been taught by their own parents or guardians or by their schools or colleges how purity in sex-relationship is essential to maintain the dignity and sanctity of family life. Therefore, let us use our citizen-rights for the good of our fellow-beings, irrespective of caste, creed, colour or sex. As the French proverb says, "What a woman will have, Good will grant". Let us consecrate our lives to noble causes, to the service of the poor and the lowly.

#### Resolutions—THE SARDA ACT

The following resolution was moved from the chair and adopted :—

"This conference expresses its whole-hearted support of the Sarda Act and pledges itself to do all in its power to ensure its successful operation. At the same time, this conference urges that it is absolutely essential for the operation of the Act that it should be so amended as to render its working more effective."

#### OBJECTIONABLE FILMS

*Mrs. H. M. Dadhaboy* moved the following resolution:

"In view of the unwholesome influence exercised by unsatisfactory films, this conference calls on the general public to co-operate with the Cinema Censor Board by drawing the attention of the Commissioner of Police to any objectionable films or posters they have seen, and secondly by helping to create public opinion in favour of better films."

In moving the resolution *Mrs. Dadhaboy* observed that the Board of Censors constituted in Madras was censoring only films directly imported into Madras and only very few name that way. A large number of films were imported into Bombay and Calcutta, and the local Board were not censoring films already censored in those places. So far as Indian films were concerned, there was no difficulty as most of them related to their mythological stories. The complaint was mainly regarding films imported from America. They could not expect the people in the trade to help them in this direction; they would state that they were only catering to the demand. An effective way of getting better films, would be to create strong public opinion. It was a mistaken impression that only the Board should find out objectionable films. Anybody could bring an objectionable film to the notice of the Commissioner of Police. The speaker hoped that the delegates would help to create a healthy public opinion in the City, and see that only good films were exhibited.

#### LEGAL DISABILITIES OF WOMEN

*Mrs. Rahmathunissa Begum* moved the following resolution :—

"The Madras Constituency of the All-India Women's Conference strongly supports the demands made by the immediate appointment of a non-official commission with an adequate proportion of women members, to enquire, with expert legal assistance, into the legal disabilities of women."

She said that the laws in this country unjustly discriminated between the sexes. This was due to the fact that women occupied a subordinate position in life. All religions assigned an equal place to women and men. It was but right that the Government should appoint a committee to investigate the question, and it was also essential that there should be women representatives on the committee.

The resolution was duly seconded and adopted.

The following resolutions were then put from the chair and adopted :—

"This Conference records its approval of all that is being done for the improvement of the sanitary condition of the city, and its satisfaction at the efforts made in recent months to beautify the public places.



"This Conference expresses its earnest conviction that society should no longer tolerate a double moral standard for men and women and records its appreciation of the very good and useful work done by the Madras Vigilance Association to combat traffic in women and children. This conference urges the necessity for wider public sympathy and support, both moral and financial, for all the rescue work undertaken to reclaim the victims of the traffic.

#### REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY

"This Conference records its conviction that the removal of untouchability is an essential step in the progress of India towards a true national life.

"This Conference urges the appropriation of grants by Government for compulsory medical inspection of girls' schools.

"With a view to the abolition of illiteracy this Conference supports all effective schemes for adult education.

"This Conference records its appreciation of the Railway concession rates hitherto granted to the delegates to the All-India Women's Conference and hopes that the railway authorities will continue to grant such concessions, thus encouraging a large number of delegates to attend the Conference."

#### EDUCATIONAL REFORM

*Miss McDougall* moved the following resolution :—

"This Conference repeats its demand for the extension of compulsory primary education of girls and for its effective carrying out where it already exists. This Conference expresses the hope that the carrying out of the Champion Scheme will not decrease the facilities at present available for the education of little girls and urges that their claims for education be generously guarded."

*Miss McDougall* observed that the Champion scheme was an excellent one in that it tried to reduce the enormous waste of money now existing and to concentrate teaching. But generally if the scheme was made applicable to both boys and girls, there would be a tendency to neglect the case of girls. The resolution would serve to remind the authorities that education of girls was as important as education of boys and should receive equal attention from them.

*Mrs. Alimchandrayammal*, in seconding the resolution, said that the stage had not been reached in this country for giving co-education in primary schools. Education to girls should be given separately as at present.

The resolution was put to the House and carried.

#### FEE CONCESSIONS

*Miss McDougall* moved :

"This Conference feels that any limitations of the fee concessions hitherto granted to girls would form a serious obstacle in the progress of their education."

*Mrs. Rahmathunissa Begum*, in seconding the resolution, observed that the education of girls in this presidency was in a very deplorable condition and at this stage to put a limitation on fee concessions granted would seriously retard the progress of education among girls. At a time when they were expecting further facilities, the Government order had come as a bolt from the blue. The order should be cancelled. The resolution was adopted unanimously.

#### TRAINING COLLEGE FOR WOMEN

*Miss Jayanthi* moved and *Srimathi Krishnaveni Ammal* seconded the following resolution which was carried unanimously:—

"In view of the insufficiency of the number of Training Colleges for women, this conference urges the establishment of more training colleges of all grades for women."

#### MUSIC IN SCHOOLS

*Srimathi Visalakshi Ammal* moved :—

"This Conference calls upon (a) all parents to teach their children music so as to develop their taste for music from an early age and (b) the managers of all schools, primary or secondary, government or private, to make that subject compulsory in the curriculum of studies in their schools."

*Mrs. Alamelumangathayarmmal* was of opinion that music should not be made compulsory in the primary stages. She moved an amendment to delete the word 'primary' from the resolution. When it was put to vote, it was rejected. The original resolution was then passed.

#### WOMEN AND ELECTIONS TO LEGISLATURES

The manifesto prepared to guide women in their choice of the Provincial and Central Legislatures and local bodies was then explained to the audience.

The manifesto stated that women should give their votes only to those candidates who would try to establish equality of rights and opportunities between men and women, who would support all schemes for the expansion and development of girls' education and who would support all measures, legal, educational and social to establish an equally high moral standard between the sexes and who were prepared to support the opinions expressed in the resolutions adopted at the Conference.

#### VIGILANCE WORK

*Miss Stephen* spoke about the work done by the Madras Vigilance Association to combat immoral traffic in the City. The Brothels Act should be made applicable to all cities in the Presidency and provision should also be made to punish persons who lived on the immoral earnings of a relative. *Miss Stephen* appealed for more workers and more funds to enable the Association to expand its work.

*Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi* made earnest appeal for funds to establish more rescue homes, for without such homes the Brothels Act could not be effectively put into operation. She also made an appeal for more women workers to help the police to rescue girls from brothels.

#### SLUM WELFARE ACTIVITIES

*Srimathi Visalakshi Ammal* gave a brief report of the slum welfare work done by the Women's Indian Association. They had till now founded three model colonies. Special efforts were being made by the workers to keep the colonies clean and tidy, to cultivate in the residents the habit of thrift and to elevate their social status by temperance and the development of a sense of civic responsibility. Several Associations in the city had come forward with help, and what they needed most was workers. If only educated women belonging to the higher castes would pay a visit to the slums at least once in a week it would be a source of encouragement to the residents. With a vote of thanks to the President, the Conference terminated.

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## The Maharashtra Women's Conference

The following resolutions were passed at the fifth session of the Maharashtra Women's Conference held at Poona on the 9th. November 1934 under the presidentship of *Dr. Kamalabhai Deshpande*, Principal of the Women's College, Yerandawana :—

(1) This Conference strongly recommends that the Sarda Act be more strictly enforced in the Presidency.

(2) This Conference disapproves certain amendments that are being brought forward for getting exemption from the Sarda Act.

(3) This Conference recommends that Government, local bodies, municipal bodies, all educational institutions and social bodies should make every possible effort to organise classes and centres for the promotion of literacy and general education among adult men and women through cinemas, magic lanterns, moving libraries, publication of suitable books in vernaculars and Kirtan, Puran, and Bhajan.

(4) This Conference desires that co-education be introduced in all primary schools and recommends that there should be women teachers on the staff as far as possible.

(5) This Conference strongly recommends that municipal and local bodies should appoint women supervisors for girls' schools and for co-educational schools.

(6) This Conference is of opinion that all boys' schools to which girls are admitted should be compelled to have at least two women teachers on the staff and to have adequate separate sanitary arrangement for girls and also to provide for the teaching of drill, needlework, domestic science and music.

(7) In view of the fact that women labourers employed in mills in India are generally married women and mothers of young children, this conference urges that adequate provision of creches for their babies and children should be made by all mill-owners.

(8) This Conference supports the resolution passed at the last session of the All-India Women's Conference viz.,

'The immediate appointment by Government of an All-India Commission with a non-official majority and an adequate number of women on its personnel to consider ways and means for the early removal of the legal disabilities of women as regards inheritance, marriage and guardianship of children and to recommend such amendments to the existing law as will make them just and equitable.'

(9) This Conference urges that arrangements be made for the establishment of home industries to enable women to add to the family income.

## The Bombay Women's Conference

Important resolutions were adopted at the conference of Bombay women held at Bombay on the 10th. November 1934. The conference also elected ten delegates for the forth-coming session of the All-India Women's conference to be held at Karachi in December next. *Mrs. Hansa Mehta*, who presided, stressed the need for birth control in view of poverty and increasing birth rate in India and appealed for assistance to the Indian Women's Medical Association regarding this work.

Among the resolutions adopted to-day were (1) supporting the Hindu Women's Inheritance Bill introduced in the Council of State, (2) drawing public attention to the fact that the Child Marriage Restraint Act did not prove efficient and expressed the opinion that a ministerial service should be established in every province in which women should have free opportunities to serve. By the third resolution the meeting urged all associations working for social uplift and removal of illiteracy among the masses to redouble their efforts. The fourth resolution urged the recognition of Hindi as an important subject in school curriculum.

## The Berar Women's Conference

The fourth session of the Berar Provincial Women's Conference commenced at Yeotmal on the 11th. November 1934. *Mrs. Kamaladevi Kihe* of Indore presided. About 500 delegates and visitors hailing from all the four districts were present.

The proceedings commenced with songs of welcome. *Mrs. Rakhmabai Bhat*, chairwoman of the reception committee, welcomed the delegates and stressed the need of women taking their proper share in shaping the destiny of their motherland.

*Mrs. Mahadevi Bhalchand*, the secretary, narrated the working of the local Women's Home. They conducted a vigorous crusade against illiteracy among grown-up women, trained nurses, and conducted classes of general instruction and handicrafts. She announced that the proceeds collected amounted to Rs. 1,370, an amount much in excess of their sanguine expectations and promised that the balance would be expended in translating the resolutions of the conference into action.

*Mrs. Sahoni* of Akola outlined the activities in Akola district and mentioned the efforts of the Sharada Ashram, which conducted debates, encouraged physical exercise and tournaments and ran a reading room.

The president, *Mrs. Kamaladevi Kibe*, delivered an extempore speech in Hindi, though her address was already printed and distributed in the conference. Her speech was listened to in pin-drop silence by the crowded audience. The burden of her speech was the supreme importance of self-reliance, which alone could evoke the soul force lying dormant within them and but for which grandiloquent speeches and beneficent resolutions in conferences were bound to prove a cry in the wilderness. She exhorted the audience to substitute consciousness of nationality in place of narrow-minded provincialism and urged the study of the Hindi language on a wider scale. In conclusion the president made a stirring appeal to follow the noble example of Mirabai, Tulsidas and other heroes of hoary antiquity and endeavour to restore India to her pristine glory.

#### RESOLUTIONS—SECOND DAY—12th. NOVEMBER 1934

The second day's proceedings of the Conference commenced at 12 noon to-day.

Sixteen resolutions were adopted, urging (1) the establishment of one high school for girls in each district and A. V. school in towns having a population of 10,000 (2) the appointment of women teachers and women members in Urdu schools, (3) medical inspection of girls by lady doctors, (4) the establishment of a high school for Urdu girls in Berar and Urdu A. V. School at Yeotmal, (5) the appointment of lady members on the coming Constituent Assembly and (6) the starting of child welfare centres in towns with a population of above 10,000.

#### RESOLUTIONS—THIRD DAY—13th. NOVEMBER 1934

The third day's proceedings were resumed in the noon to-day. The conference protested against Raja Bahadur Krishnamachari's bill repealing the Sarda Act and urged more stringent enforcement of the Sarda Act by doing away with the security clause in it, demanded suffrage for every literate woman, urged the appointment of women as jurors, supported the demand of the All-India Women's Conference respecting the appointment of an All-India committee to propose improvements in the legal status and rights of women and demanded representation for women on the said committee.

Mention of divorce by one speaker raised a veritable storm of controversy. The resolution was, however, passed by the tactful handling of the situation by the president. The conference represented a tendency to put blind faith in persons masquerading under the guise of religious or spiritual saints.

The last resolution appealed to women in cities to strive their utmost to tour through rural areas to spread ideas of progress and assist uplift in all directions of womenfolk in villages.

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### The Mysore Women's Conference

Presiding over the ninth session of the Mysore State Women's Conference held at Bangalore on the 10th, November 1934, *Mrs. Margaret E. Cousins* observed that there was a tendency for women to think that things ought to be made easy for them so that they might take their place in public life. "It is an illusion. Women may expect that they will have to struggle hard for the plums of life, even for the right to do hard services for a good many. They will not be pampered with reserved seats. It is not good for them nor for the national morale. But those who are brave and feel the call of service, of patriotism will not shrink from contested elections, from failures, perhaps in them, from sacrifices, from even daily difficulties of dedicated life."

*Mrs. Cousins*, proceeding, said that the lead of women in the matter of asking for joint electorates at this juncture of constitution-making was worthy of all praise. The idea of special seats for women was pampering and was based on an inferiority complex. Women must not be afraid of hard work and hard knocks. Let Durga Devi be their model.

"We meet at a time when the western hemisphere is rushing towards another terrible war which God forbid. But we women must send our thoughts out against any such sacrifices of human material which women have risked their lives to bring into

world. It is the glory of India that it is launching into the world its ideal of non-violence as an alternative to bloody warfare. At the Bombay Congress the creed of non-violence was reiterated. Women everywhere will rejoice in such a new instrument of gaining the ends of securing justice and ending quarrels.

### RESOLUTIONS—SECOND DAY—11th. NOVEMBER 1934

The Conference re-assembled this morning. Mrs. Cousins presiding, when the reports of the sectional secretaries were read. Resolutions given notice of by members were then discussed.

#### ENCOURAGEMENT TO INDIGENOUS INDUSTRIES

*Mrs. Kamalamma H. Dasappa* moved a resolution to the effect that greater encouragement be given to indigenous industries.

In doing so, *Mrs. Kamalamma* referred to the village reconstruction scheme of Mahatma Gandhi and appealed to the women of Mysore to foster indigenous industries as far as possible. They should all take a vow to cultivate the Swadeshi spirit. After being seconded by *Mrs. V. Ramalingam*, the resolution was carried unanimously.

The resolution of *Mrs. K. D. Rukmaniamma* requesting Government to provide from next year for the teaching of science subjects in the Intermediate classes of the Maharani's College in Mysore, was next discussed and adopted unanimously.

In commending the resolution for the acceptance of the House, *Mrs. Rukmaniamma* referred to the decision of the University to transfer the Maharani's College from Mysore to Bangalore and said that this would act as a great handicap to the girls in Mysore. She thought that even if the transfer was effected, the intermediate classes would be retained. At present if a lady student wanted to take up science subjects, she had to go to Bangalore. This meant hardship and great expenditure.

*Miss Z. Lazarus*, *Mrs. Kamalamma H. Dasappa* and *Thankachamma* supported the resolution.

#### "CLEAN" FILM CAMPAIGN

*Miss Tomlinson* next moved the following resolution :—"The Women's Conference regards the exhibition of many films shown to the public in cinema houses as objectionable, and dangerous to the minds of the young. It prays that the Government will take speedy steps to purify the cinema and so to remove a great danger from our cities and towns : this Conference further prays that the exhibition of unwholesome pictures and posters may be prohibited ; and further urges upon the authorities the advisability of appointing some ladies as members of the Board of Censors for cinemas."

*Mrs. V. R. Thiagaraja Aiyar* made a scathing condemnation of modern day films and pointed out that the young boys and girls after seeing such films tried to imitate western methods and ideas. Much reform was needed in regard to these cinemas and she appealed to the Conference to urge on the attention of Government the desirability of preventing the exhibition of indecent films and prohibiting boys and girls of tender age from attending these unwholesome films.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

On the motion of *Mrs. Indirabai Vasudevamurthi*, the Conference resolved unanimously that Hindi be made a common language for India.

#### SUPPRESSION OF IMMORAL TRAFFIC

The Conference next adopted the resolution of *Sister Ethel Tankinson*, heartily supporting the Bill for the suppression of immoral traffic among women and children and requested Government to pass the Bill at an early date and open the needed rescue homes.

On the motion of the President, the House adopted another resolution, strongly urging the need of railway companies in India issuing concession tickets to delegates attending the All-India Women's Conference to be held at Karachi next month.

The personnel of the Standing Committee of the State Women's Conference for the next year was then announced. The Conference then adjourned for the day.



## RESOLUTIONS—THIRD DAY—12th. NOVEMBER 1934

Mrs. Mandyam of Shimoga moved to-day that legislation legalising virgin widow marriages be enacted.

This resolution evoked keen discussion. Mrs. V. R. Thiagaraja Aiyar, Mrs. A. S. R. Chari and Sri Thangachamma, while according their support to the principle of marriages for virgin widows, expressed themselves strongly against any legalisation of such marriages.

Mrs. Indira Bai Vasudevamurthi said that in the interest of the children born of the marriage of virgin widows, such marriages should be legalised.

On the motion of Dr. Mathura Bai, the further consideration of this subject was deferred, in view of its importance.

The Conference then adopted the following resolutions :—

"This Conference strongly recommends to Government that more uniformity be shown in the distribution to girls of all communities scholarships and other facilities for the encouragement of girls' education.

"This Conference requests the authorities to establish an S.P.C.A. in each district,

"This Conference requests the Government to exempt women from the rule of having to own taxable property in their own name before they can serve on the Educational section of the District Boards".

After the resolutions were discussed, Mrs. Cousins, in winding up the proceedings, congratulated the women of Mysore on the remarkable manner in which they had helped her to carry through the business. The discussion covered a variety of subjects and the speakers showed great freedom of thought and independence in their speeches. Mrs. Cousins suggested to the authorities of the Mysore State Women's Conference the desirability of holding these conferences in rural areas, so that the masses could be educated. With the garlanding of the President and the usual vote of thanks, the Conference came to an end.

## The Travancore Women's Conference

The All India Women's Travancore Constituent Conference was held at Trivandrum on the 17th November 1934 under the presidency of *Dr. Mrs. Muthulakshmi Reddi*.

### JUNIOR MAHARANI'S MESSAGE

At the outset *Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi* read the message of Her Highness the Junior Maharani which was as follows : "Initiated as this Conference has been by the All-India body which aims at presenting to women in India their responsibilities as citizens and mothers of future citizens and securing equality of rights and opportunities between men and women, it has wisely made every one of its constituent organisations, largely autonomous. Travancore has made great strides in women's education and does not suffer from some of the handicaps that elsewhere hamper the growth of our movement. But as is clear from your agenda here is still enormous volume of work before us. Education and social betterment and many other forms of social service that are comprised in your programme must be dealt with in terms of local conditions and I, therefore, welcome the Travancore Conference and wish it a successful session."

### WELCOME ADDRESS

*Mrs. Devasikhamani*, President of the Reception Committee, welcomed the gathering and spoke of the wide scope for fellowship and social work for a body like the All-India Women's Conference which knew only one caste of womanhood. She then referred to *Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi* and her great work in the cause of the upliftment of Indian womanhood.

After referring to conditions in Travancore in regard to literacy and conditions of employment, she suggested wider diffusion of education and appealed for action by members and for a spirit of service for the all-round upliftment of women.

#### PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

*Dr. Muthulakshmi Reldi*, in the course of her extempore presidential address, after thanking the organisers for their kindness and welcome, referred to the establishment of the Home for the Destitute and the generosity of the royal family.

Speaking of the All-India Women's Conference, she said that there were 118 branches from the North-West Frontier to Trivandrum. She congratulated the women of Travancore on the mark made at the conference and their intelligent matriarchal system and the unparalleled example of women not abusing their power and congratulated them on possessing freedom, equal rights and opportunities with men. She expressed the view that Travancore women were the best fitted to serve the whole of India in spreading education. She pointed out that Mahatma Gandhi had called Malabar and Travancore a "black spot" so far as untouchability and unapproachability was concerned and she appealed to them to work for the removal of these disabilities. Nature was bountiful and beautiful, but why should humanity be so ungenerous? The uplift of the backward classes was in the hands of women.

Congratulating the Conference on sending two students to Delhi Lady Irwin College of Domestic Science, she spoke of the importance of application of science in practical life and the need for establishing nutrition bureaux for explaining the values of vitamins. She exhorted the members of the Conference to take their legitimate part in the legislature and municipalities and appealed to Travancore women to come out to other provinces like foreign missionaries. She concluded by saying that education without being consecrated to the service of humanity and merely for the possession of academic qualification was of no value.

#### ANNUAL REPORT

The annual report of the Travancore constituent conference of the All-India Conference was read by *Srimathi Rukminiamma*.

The report showed that during the last year the constituency mainly devoted its attention to educational and social works. The membership was 100. On account of the numerous preoccupations of the members in connection with His Excellency the Viceroy's visit, the Palliketta of the First Princess and other functions, the constituency was not able to achieve anything spectacular. In the matter of adult education the members took upon themselves the task of educating illiterate domestic servants. The constituency appraised the Government of the urgent necessity of removing the Hindu cremation ground from the neighbourhood of the Women and Children's Hospital. A sum of Rs. 700 was collected towards the Bihar Relief Fund. A meeting was convened to pass resolutions requesting the Government of India to appoint a committee to enquire into the legal disabilities of women in India and suggest remedies. The report acknowledged the valuable co-operation received from leading members of the Trivandrum Bar. The constituency deputed two students, one a graduate and the other an under-graduate, to undergo training in the Lady Irwin College for Domestic Science. The report records the valuable co-operation received from the Vanita Sangham, Mahila Mandiram, Y. W. C. A. and the Womens' Council of Help. The report expressed the gratitude of the constituency to Their Highnesses the Maharaja and Junior Maharani for their gracious support and interest in the uplift of womanhood in the State.

*Mrs. A. Alexander* addressed the gathering. She said that women delegates to the Round Table Conference had created a very good impression in England. The freedom won by women was not for mere self-glorification but for the service of womankind. There was a huge number of lady graduates in Travancore but they had not accomplished anything. Speaking of beggary the speaker was of opinion that mere legislation was of no avail. She met with beggars in London, though beggary was a crime there. People begged under the guise of one thing or another. Public spirit and action alone could reduce beggary and in India it was women who encouraged beggary and it was for women to prevent beggary. Then the speaker dwelt on the need for juvenile literature and periodicals for ladies. She pleaded for expansion of their work throughout the State.

*Mrs. Thankamma Padmanabha Pillai* speaking in Malayalam observed that educated women in Travancore had to knock at the doors of heads of departments and get disappointed. The system of education was at fault. They had freedom and they had to make use of that freedom to reforce the system of education. Organized work in thevarious fields was the dire need of the hour. Many women were too

modest to get out and too poor to remain at home. He suggested an organization based on co-operative principles and opined that educated women could be a great use in this work.

In the afternoon session, resolutions were discussed.

### Resolutions

Resolutions of loyalty and felicitations to His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore on his attaining the 22nd. birthday, expressing gratitude to His Highness for his munificence in founding a Home for the Destitute and Infirm, were moved from the chair and passed, all standing. A condolence resolution recording deep sense of sorrow and loss at the death of Sir O. Sankaran Nair was passed, all standing. The Conference passed resolutions congratulating Mrs. Bernard on her election as Chairman of the Cochin Municipality and Miss Hanno Beebi, the first Mahomedan lady to take the B. A. Degree in Travancore.

### PROMOTION OF ADULT EDUCATION

*Mrs. M. O. Verghese* moved a resolution emphasising the need for organised efforts to promote adult education. She observed that, despite the headway made in the field of education. Travancore was far behind other civilised countries. The addition to the number of literates during the last decade was not much. It was 9 per cent for males and 4 per cent for females. The lapses into illiteracy had become one of the baneful features. The reason was to be found in the fact that there was no vital connection between school life and home life. Once out of school meant complete ignorance. A high level of literacy was an essential requisite of successful democracy. The speaker suggested grants-in-aid to night schools and agreed with the view of the Statham Committee regarding night schools being attached to training schools. She pleaded for a definite policy and organised work.

*Srimathi Anandavalliamma*, seconding the resolution, said that illiterate sisters outside the hall would be eager to know what some women were doing inside. It was a misfortune that their ignorance prevented them from satisfying their curiosity. If they desired political regeneration or social reform, it could be achieved only by the spread of adult education. She hoped that members would first see that their domestic servants were literate. Cochin stood first with 22 per cent and it was but right they should work for widespread literacy.

*Srimathi Meenakshiamma* supported the resolution in a Malayalam speech. The necessity of literacy was felt all the more when women had to exercise their franchise. Political rights could be exercised only when the mass had a knowledge of general affairs. Adult education by means of radio and gramophone was suggested by the speaker.

The resolution was then put to vote and was passed unanimously.

### WOMEN TEACHERS FOR BOYS

*Mrs. Dhanakoti Pillai* moved a resolution urging that education of boys and girls should be in the hands of women. In the course of her Tamil speech, Mrs. Dhanakoti Pillai observed that psychologically women were best fitted to teach children. On account of their inherent sympathy with native wit, joy and mirth of children women could guide children much better than men.

*Miss N. C. Annamma*, in supporting the resolution, observed that the idea was not new in Travancore. Co-education had yielded the best results in America and England. There were 37,000 children below the age of six and the Montessori and Kindergarten methods could be taught only by women successfully.

The resolution was unanimously passed.

### COURSE IN HYGIENE FOR GIRLS

*Srimathi V. G. Gouriamma*, moving a resolution recommending that Hygiene and Home Science be made subjects of practical study in all girls' schools, observed that hygiene taught in the formative period of a girls' life quickened her civic conscience and the amount of nuisance committed by children on roads would be a thing of the past if women were taught hygiene and the art of home-keeping.

*Mrs. Statham*, seconding the resolution, observed that hygiene and domestic science were highly necessary and important. They wanted not blue stockings but

good housewives. Scientifically fed and brought up babies were required and she hoped that future generations of Travancore would be supermen.

*Miss A. Zacharia*, supporting the resolution, observed that the usual charge levelled against educated women was that they neglected domestic work. Domestic economy, study of food and first aid were all useful aids to a healthy and enlightened life.

*Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy* explained the varied syllabus of the Lady Irwin College and she hoped that members would attach great importance to the subjects.

The resolution was unanimously passed.

#### MORAL INSTRUCTION

*Srimathi C. Rukminiamma* moved a resolution urging that moral instruction be made compulsory in schools.

She pointed out that the present condition of boys and girls was not satisfactory viewed from a moral standpoint. Disobedience and spirit of revolt were everywhere noticeable. Slightest misunderstanding was sufficient for harbouring hatred and without character and rational obedience no education would be complete.

*Miss Eunice Gomez* wanted the proposition to be made clear. Moral instruction could not be made compulsory in the sense the mover wanted it to be done. Though she would not say that morality was comparative there was a difference of opinion as regards moral teaching. No child could learn morals, if every time the teacher used don'ts. Compulsion always led to rebellion. She thought the girl guide movement and social activities would help the students.

The *President* then explained the resolution. She said the resolution was meant to emphasise the necessity of bringing out the best of human nature. The epics which were taught from time immemorial had a lot of moral worth in them. Truth is truth in all religions. Raja Ram Mohan Roy assimilated this great idea. Girl guide activities were one of the methods to achieve the end but a provision for emphasising the necessity of moral instruction was always made in the resolutions of the All-India Conferences.

The resolution was put to vote and carried, 35 voting for and 22 against.

#### LITERATURE FOR JUVENILES

*Miss A. Chandy* moved a resolution urging the need for improved juvenile literature in vernaculars and requesting the Government to appoint a committee to consider the question. She spoke of the need for such literature in India. Children's newspapers were few; poetry books did not deal with Indian conditions. Children's magazines were rare. A great deal of good resulted from having healthy juvenile literature.

*Mrs. L. Narayanan Nair*, seconding the resolution, observed that starvation of intellect and existence of superstition that ate into the vitals of the people could be prevented by the improved juvenile literature. The resolution was passed unanimously.

#### MEDICAL INSPECTION IN SCHOOLS

*Mrs. S. Rajamma Padmanabha Pillai* moved a resolution urging frequent and effective medical inspection in primary and high schools. She referred to the poor health conditions and the poor average life of Indians and said that systematic and thorough inspections were absolutely necessary.

*Miss Eunice Gomez*, in seconding the resolution, observed that stupidity and stubbornness among children were due to some physical defects and medical inspection alone could discover them. Sometimes the defect was not noticed till an advanced age when it was too late. The resolution was unanimously passed.

#### NEED FOR NURSERY SCHOOLS

*Miss Joyce Vedakan* moved a resolution urging the need for nursery schools and requesting the Government to take speedy measures for opening them. In the course of her observations, the speaker observed that the latent powers of the child could be brought out in nursery schools. The waste in the pre-school-age was a loss to the State.

*Miss S. K. George* seconded the resolution which was passed unanimously.

#### BEGGARY PROBLEM

*Miss N. C. Annama*, in moving a resolution urging the need for organised relief and legislation to prevent professional beggary and calling upon the public to co-



operate, observed that the public mind was not sufficiently stirred in the matter. Charity was ordinarily conceived to be a household divinity and this led to laziness of able-bodied persons. What was wanted was the pooling of resources and organised relief. The destitute had a right to the resources of the State and society and the fortunate few should set apart something for their unfortunate fellow-beings and organised relief would prevent beggary and indiscriminate charity.

Miss *G. R. Thankamma*, in seconding the resolution, observed that beggary became hereditary and it was the direct cause for the spread of contagious diseases. She hoped that the establishment of a rubber factory would in a way solve the problem of unemployment among the destitute. The resolution was passed unanimously.

Mrs. *G. Raman Pillai* moved a resolution for extending the activities of the conference to the mofussil and seconded by Mrs. *P. V. Nayar* it was passed.

#### ENQUIRY INTO WOMEN'S DISABILITIES

Mrs. *K. N. Aiyar*, in moving a resolution appealing to the Government of India to appoint a commission to enquire into the legal disabilities of the women of India, detailed the various disabilities of Hindu women in matters of inheritance, maintenance and proprietary rights.

Mrs. *Srinivasam*, seconding the resolution, observed that women were always dependent on the charity of males and invariably they were the sufferers. Hindu law must be suitably amended. Mrs. *N. S. S. Aiyar* supported the resolution in a Tamil speech, and it was passed.

Resolutions were also passed congratulating the Social Service League on the clean-up campaign, urging need for members of the conference taking active steps for the uplift of the depressed classes and for the abolition of untouchability.

*Srimathi Anandavalliamma* moved a resolution urging the need of women members in municipal councils and appealing to the women of the land to take active steps to get their representatives elected. Mrs. *K. C. Tharian* seconded the resolution which was passed unanimously.

## The Andhra Women's Conference

The eighth session of the Andhra Desa Constituency Conference was held on the 17th. November 1934 at the Besant Hall, Madanapalle under the presidency of *Srimathi G. Durgabai*. A very large gathering of delegates from all over the Andhra Desa attended. Over 500 ladies from the town attended the conference.

*Sreemathi G. Durgabai*, raising amidst cheers, delivered her presidential address. In the course of her speech, she said :

"The problem of the status of Indian womanhood is, in my opinion, much deeper than what it may seem at first sight. Our contact with the Western nations has brought our ideals into conflict with those of the Western civilisation. It has fallen to our lot as representatives of the movement in favour of the emancipation of Indian womanhood to seek an adjustment of the aggressive materialism of the West with the modest and retiring virtues of the East. It is our sacred duty to show by example that we are aiming at that type of womanhood which embodies in itself the ideal partner of the husband, the loving mother of the child, the humanitarian social worker, and a soldier in the battle for freedom.

If there is any aspect of the life of the Indian woman that requires a close and careful attention, it is the status and position assigned to her in the family and in society. The ancient and time-worn laws of Manu and Mitakshara still control our domestic relations and are to-day quoted as authorities in codes of law. I need not expatiate on the contemptuous conditions under which a widow lives in a Hindu joint family. In my opinion, it is high time that our rights of inheritance on an equal footing with that of the male members of the family are recognized and protected by Statute law.

I now come to a thorny question upon which much may be said on either side—I mean the right of divorce. The right is entirely alien to the principles of Hindu law which consider marriage as a sacrament, an indissoluble bond, once made that



cannot be dissolved. I would suggest a rule of law by which in cases of cruelty, proved to the satisfaction of a court of law, the wife should be allowed to exercise her right of divorce. The law as it stands to-day concerning marital relations, no doubt, provides in such cases separate maintenance on a decent scale, but it nowhere sanctions the right of re-marriage, and I think it is but bare justice that the fair partner who had the misfortune to be ill-treated should have another chance of useful life with family. This law would also be made applicable to all other cases in which the present law allows separate maintenance.

Another aspect of social reform which has been engaging the attention of the Indian public for a decade is for the prevention of child marriages. It should be here mentioned to the credit of the Government that it has done something to effect this reform. Strong views are expressed, both in favour and against the Sarda Act as it now stands. But, in my opinion, except for the removing of one or two loop-holes in the legislation such as the non-applicability of the provisions of the Act to marriages performed in other than British Indian provinces and the absence of a clause declaring the marriages of girls below twelve years void, the Act itself appears to have been conceived and worked on a basis that should receive the approval of all dispassionate thinkers.

The Hindu society, which has survived the vicissitudes to which the Indian nation has been subjected, has yet one sore point that requires our immediate attention. All honour to the idol of the Indian nation, Mahatma Gandhi, who has taken up the cause of the untouchables as more dear to him than his own life. Reform in this direction which did not receive any attention worth mentioning a couple of years back has been made one of the foremost problems of India to-day by the great impetus given to it by the epic fast of Mahatma Gandhi and his all-India campaign. Of course, there is a vast amount of work yet to be done both in rousing public opinion in favour of the so-called untouchables and for improving their economic and social conditions. Indeed, I am strongly of opinion that the immediate need is their economic uplift.

Now I come to a sphere of reform the need for which is as insistent as the neglect with which it has been treated. I have no hesitation in saying—and I believe you will agree with me—that the crying need of India is the eradication of the proverbial illiteracy of the Indian masses. I need hardly point out to you the imperative necessity for formulating mass education schemes.

Sisters, these are some of the important problems that confront us and for which we were seeking solution. But I have refrained up to now from mentioning the one supreme problem of the Indian nation, which without our facing it boldly, we shall not be able to render a good account of ourselves with regard to others.

The social needs of India, the economic uplift and the educational advance of the Indian masses are inextricably mixed up with the political status of our country. In a slave country like India, the first and foremost duty of every child of the nation is to rend asunder the shackles of slavery. We are to-day economically, socially and politically the slaves of a Western nation. Our economic poverty is directly due to its domination. Our social inequalities, our communal differences, which seem to threaten us at every stage of our political advance, and the inferior position assigned to us among the sister nations of the world can only be explained on this assumption. As for the political status of the Indians, it hardly requires any comment: the Indians are comparatively nowhere even in their own country.

I am of opinion that the crux of the matter is the economic dependence of India on England. The poverty-stricken villagers have hardly a full meal a day. Let us put our heads together and organize ourselves to achieve unity of purpose and action to root out the evils that sap our strength, to carry light and learning to the masses and lead them to victory in every field of activity, a victory that shall be the glory of our motherland."

The President was followed by Mrs. D. Lakshmibai, Mrs. S. Kamalamma and others who all spoke on some of the important problems before the conference.

### Resolutions

The conference then passed a number of resolutions.

Regret was expressed that the registered graduates of the Andhra University did not elect to the Senate Mrs. D. Lakshmi Gurumurti, B. A., who stood for open election to the Senate in the recent by-election.

A resolution was passed that there should be a separate Women's College in Andhra Desa and that a separate hostel for girls be provided in the Vizag Medical School.

The Conference requested the Government and Local Bodies to encourage vocational education. The Conference requested the Andhra Desa Women's constituency to contribute its share to the sum of Rs. 1,000 promised by the Madras Presidency as a contribution for Domestic Science College, Delhi.

All the resolutions were moved by the chair and passed unanimously.

#### RESOLUTIONS—SECOND DAY—18th NOVEMBER 1934

The proceedings of the Conference concluded after a number of resolutions were passed.

There was a warm debate on the resolution giving the support of the Conference to the Hindu Marriages Dissolution Bill, and it was thrown out ultimately by an overwhelming majority.

The Conference demanded the strict enforcement of Sarda Act and lent its whole-hearted support to the abolition of untouchability. It demanded also the grant of equal rights to women in all walks of life especially in the matter of inheritance. A resolution was also passed, recommending a more vigilant control over the release of films.

The Conference recommended the use by women of khaddar and swadeshi.

A resolution was passed, condemning the Communal Award and recommending Joint Electorates. The early creation and formation of a separate Andhra Province was also passed. The Conference then terminated.

## The Delhi Women's Conference

The ninth session of the Delhi Women's Provincial Constituent Conference was held in the Saraswati Bhawan, New Delhi on the 27th. November 1934 under the presidency of *Lady N. N. Sirkar*. The conference attracted a record crowd including a large number of Muslim women, prominent being Lady Shafi, Begum Zafar Hussain, Begum Mohammad Ali, Mrs. Bajpai, and Miss Young. In the course of her speech, the President said :—

'The time is past when there was any necessity for preaching on the vital importance of the objects of this league. No reasonable man or woman can possibly deny that one of the most pressing problems of this country is the removal of the appalling illiteracy among our sisters.

'While the Government may not have enough funds for starting compulsory primary education, are we to sit with folded hands? We may not be able to attain success to the extent we desire, but whatever we can do, however small, will be distinct gain.

'I find also that the league is interested in removing disabilities of women in matters of inheritance and other rights of women. It is a hopeful feature that among at least a certain section of Indians, the feeling is growing that time has come for removing age-long injustices done to women.

While in this country, conservatism is a bar to social progress, signs are not wanting that the citadel of conservatism is receiving continued attacks and this league, I am sure, can help in this campaign.

'The object of one of the resolutions to be moved to-day for taking some members of this league in the education, sanitation, maternity and child welfare sub-committees of the municipality is so just and proper that I am sure this league will express its opinion in clear and emphatic terms.

'I can assure my sisters that I shall consider it a privilege if I can be of any assistance in furthering the cause of this league to which I wish success in its efforts to improve the condition of women in this province.'

Mrs. Asaf Ali next presented the annual report in the course of which she enumerated that the league opened a primary co-educational school which was running on non-communal lines in the village Chandrawal, a girls' school had been opened by Mrs. Pearylal, a member of the league, and the attendance indicated

that prejudice against education for girls was on the wane; the league started a music school for popularising Indian music and classical dancing, and members of the league started an industrial school for needy women and another school for imparting instruction in higher Hindi. The league started the independent Bihar earthquake relief fund and appointed committees for other social works.

Mrs. Asaf Ali said that it was due to the efforts of the league that nearly 5 per cent voters of the women participated in the municipal elections and it was due to the defective electoral roll and the absence of separate booths that only 30 per cent of the women voters participated in the Assembly elections.

### Resolutions

Without a division the conference passed seven resolutions emphatically disapproving of the existing discriminations against women, demanding the appointment of a commission to consider the removal of the legal disabilities of women as regards inheritance and marriage, urging that the proceedings of the All-India conference be in Hindustani, that the Government should take immediate steps to check the growing evil of the increasing number of cases of abduction and traffic in women, that parental co-operation was necessary for primary education, that till such time as women were not elected to the municipality the members of the league be coopted on the education, sanitation, maternity and child welfare sub-committees of the municipality and that the Railway Board be requested to grant concessions for delegates to the annual session of the All-India Women's Conference.

The only resolution that was lost by 40 to 24 votes was that advising Muslim parents and guardians to draw up marriage contracts safeguarding the legal rights of their daughters and wards at the time of their marriages and recommending the adoption of the model contract circulated by the All-India Women's Conference. It was explained for the resolution that it was not binding on everybody; nevertheless there was strong opposition.

After voting, a point of order was raised that only Muslims and not Hindus should vote as it concerned the former which was, however, over-ruled, it being a mixed gathering. The conference then terminated.

## The Cochin Women's Conference

The ninth Cochin Constituent Conference of the All-India Women's Conference was held on the 22nd. November 1934 in the premises of the Women's Union Club, Trichur under the presidentship of Mrs. *Dorothy Dunning Chacko*. In the course of her speech she said:—

It is a great pleasure for me to be with you to-day, and I am glad that the opportunity of presiding on this occasion has necessitated my familiarising myself to some extent with the work of the All-India Women's Conference. I wish to compliment the ladies who met in Calcutta on both the scope and the ability demonstrated in the report of the eighth Conference. I am sure it must also be a matter of gratification to all of us here in Cochin to see that in this State we have no less than nine local associations, surely as high a proportion as that of any area in India.

There is quite a lot of agitation to-day, as there must have been many times before in the history of the world, about "woman's place." Italy and Germany are insisting that "her place is in the home," are discouraging the training of women in many professional lines, and are putting premiums on large families. To some of the rest of the world it seems as if they were merely trying to raise "cannon fodder" for future wars. However that may be, what really is the value of women in the world? Despite the recent German denunciation of the equality of men and women as a "product of decadent Jewish intellectualism," I venture to assert that men and women are equally valuable, though not identically valuable. Both have their own particular contributions to make to the life of the world, psychologically speaking, and one cannot get along without the other.

Woman is essentially conservative. I do not mean that she is not radical—she is often more radical than man—but I mean that she instinctively tends to save,

to preserve everything that might be of value. This often results in the conservation of many things of dubious value, but women is very economical, and she cannot bear to see anything wasted which might be used.

Women hates to see the waste of human life that there is in the world. That is why most women hate war. They are ardent workers against disease, when once they see it can be prevented. They are the pioneers against bad working conditions. They are the leaders in trying to prevent moral downfall. Woman dislikes to see the waste of human energy. Many of the labour-saving devices which the western housewife uses are the ideas of women, though frequently carried out by men. The foremost authority on the saving of useless motions in the work of factory employees is a woman.

But we do hate to see money wasted on drink, and on cheap articles which quickly wear out, and on education which does not fit the young person for the kind of life they are to lead. And women will take pains over the details. She notices the little things which go wrong, the small defects in her child, the slight lag in the little one's department. Therefore we can expect women to take the lead, when once they see its possibilities, in the vast field of preventive medicine and social hygiene.

Despite this comprehensive programme, she is no idle visionary. She demands that the things to which she devotes her energies should have some practical value. Therefore whatever we suggest as resolutions, or plan as projects, should be very applicable to the present conditions, and so well organised that the hour or two a week that she spends on that will be definitely contributing something worth while.

I should judge that we have a vast army of potential workers here in this State. There seem to be so many young girls who have 'completed' their education and are now sitting around home waiting to get married, and many older women with no obligations around the house who would be vastly improved in health and disposition if they had something interesting and useful to do. But to use these women we must have trained and enthusiastic leadership. Therefore, when I read one of the resolutions which is going to be proposed this afternoon, asking the Government to establish a Women's College in Trichur, I wondered if we didn't really need a training institute for social workers even more. Then these women would go back to their communities and help to increase the health, wealth and happiness there. The system of a yearly health examination for the whole population, with care for routine illnesses, a family health insurance, is gaining wide popularity in the United States and is now being instituted in Allahabad. It means an immense saving in health and medical bills.

My limited observation leads me to think that the babies and breast-fed infants here in Cochin are as fine and as healthy as any in India but the moment they are wanted—or ought to be—they don't get enough of the proper food, and promptly fail to gain properly and succumb to all manner of illness. I am convinced that what has been done in Korea to improve the diet of the people without increasing the money spent on food can be done here, with an immeasurable improvement in the health of the population. For study and experimentation of this kind we need a well-organised scheme, not expensive and grand to begin with, but enlisting the co-operation of some hundreds of housewives who will keep a careful record for a year of what their family eats and what it cost per item, and of mothers who will try the new food combinations, and keep accurate records for us, while the Health Institute notes the health and gain in weight of the family. In three years' time we should be able to make some really worth while suggestions on feeding the family. Much of the value of the inadequate school examining we now have here in Cochin is lost because no one follows up the doctor's suggestions. We women could render a real service if we appointed a committee to co-operate with the school physician in the matter.

There are many ways of increasing the wealth of a community. Why not experiment this year on a few labour-saving devices for the household? Also we certainly have plenty of practical local problems in fighting drink, opium, heavy marriage expenses, and the loading of children with ornaments. Both health and wealth contribute towards happiness, but there is a great deal to be done in the realms of the mind and the spirit if we are going to have happy homes and truly happy communities. Marriage, which affects all of us women in some way or other, could be much happier. Many of the old customs have value and should be retained, but others are definitely detrimental. And would not many homes be happier if the husband closed his shop by six or



seven p. m. and came home to supper, instead of keeping his poor wife up till midnight? And if we are to follow up the resolution passed against corporal punishment in the schools, we must instruct not only the teachers in the art of getting the child's co-operation without the stick, but also educate out the idea of corporal punishment in the home. Proper instruction in sex and social hygiene will do much to increase happiness, but few teachers and parents are at present willing or able to give such help. I do feel also that we should provide better literature for our young people. Too many college graduates are stranded without jobs. We must find ways of training our young people for a greater variety of occupations, and make them feel proud to take up these non-collegiate lines.

I would suggest that each of the nine branches of this Conference here in Cochin State should choose some one project for the coming year, and devote their energies to that. Then next year we can pool our experiences, not only by discussions but also by exhibitions, at the annual conference, and so gradually build up our whole programme. One group might concentrate on labour-saving devices, another on diet, another on co-operation with the local schools in health follow-ups and noon-day meals for needy children, another on securing good literature, another on social hygiene, still another on family life, and all of us could contribute to an exhibit on hobbies—the use of spare time. When these programmes have been well worked out, we will need women who can design attractive posters, such as "Eat more Eggs" or "Drink more milk," and there is plenty of scope for talent in writing pageants or plays dealing with our various problems. The public can be reached through the eye even better than through the ear.

### **T h e S e c r e t a r y ' s R e p o r t**

Mrs. C. K. John, Secretary and Standing Committee member of the Cochin constituency of the All-India Women's Association, in the course of her annual report, said that the local Branch had been carrying on their work through the Women's Association and that the draft model constitution sent from the headquarters, was circulated in the seven sub-constituencies for their views. They had been doing educational and social work, the chief of which was the enquiry they conducted regarding women workers of the local Sitaram Spinning and Weaving Mills with a view to starting a children's creche in addition to awarding maternity benefits to the women workers there. They had also helped suffering Bihar by a decent contribution and had induced the Dewan of Cochin, for sending two women teachers from the State to the Lady Irwin College, Delhi, to be trained in Home Science. Literature about septic tank (latrine) was obtained and the local Municipality was persuaded to establish that system wherever possible, a few private houses having already commenced to experiment now. A building and site for their use was granted by the Government of Cochin, and the Municipality had generously given them a grant of Rs. 500. The Government had responded to their request by creating and appointing a Sanitary Inspectress to the new post in the Health Department and they regretted that they could not successfully stop the beggar nuisance without the help of private social bodies. Mrs. G. K. Devadar's instructive address on 'Co-operation' and the frequent socials they were holding, had afforded opportunities for the ladies and the children of the locality to mix freely.

### **R e s o l u t i o n s**

Resolutions were then discussed and passed. The Conference offered its heartfelt thanks to the Government of Cochin, for the financial support given to it every year and requested the Government to sanction a grant of Rs. 200 towards the expenses of the delegates attending the All-India Women's Conference to be held at Karachi in December next. The Government was requested to institute a separate training institute for women in the State. The next resolution urged the appointment of a lady doctor in the Central Ayurvedic Hospital, Trichur, while the other resolution requested the Government of Cochin to start a Women's College in Trichur, where Home science and other domestic subjects might be taught in addition to industrial matters befitting ladies. Another resolution regretted the fact that the Child Marriage Restraint Act had not been brought into force in the State and requested the Government to take stringent measures to enforce the Act. Yet another resolution requested the Government and the Municipalities to take steps to stop public begging and to co-operate with the Women's Association in the matter of starting industries homes in each locality to give employment or means of livelihood



to the poor. The Government was further requested to amend the rule prohibiting Government servants from taking a part in the management of associations of a non-political character.

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## The Karachi Women's Conference

A resolution requesting the Government of India to appoint a committee consisting of leading women lawyers and social workers to inquire into the position of women under the Hindu and Mahomedan law, with a view to amend the law so as to remove disabilities of women, was passed by a representative conference of women held at Karachi on the 25th. November 1934, Mrs. S. C. Mukherjee, Organising Secretary, All-India Women's Conference, presiding.

The conference *inter alia* advocated Hindi or Urdu as the medium of communication throughout India, the establishment of vigilance committees throughout India to prevent violation of the Child Marriages Restraint Act.

Begum Abdulla Haroon said that it was difficult to express their natural feelings and tendencies unless they did so through their mother-tongue.

Doctor Tarabai said that child marriages were against religion and were detrimental to the interests of the nation and women's physical development.

Mrs. Tyabji stressed the need for village upliftment and opined that if progress was to be attained, it was essential they should carry the masses with them.

There was a lively discussion on the resolution urging the removal of the legal disabilities of women. Supporting the resolution, Begum Haroon wanted, in addition to property rights for women, right of divorce. Hindu women speakers did not favour this, but in deference to the wishes of their Mahomedan sisters, they agreed to the resolution.

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## The Allahabad Women's Conference

The Allahabad constituent conference of the All-India Women's Conference was held at the Ladies Purdah Club, Allahabad, on the 9th. December 1934 under the presidentship of Lady L. G. Mukherjee. Among those who participated in the discussions were Mrs. P. N. Sapro, Mrs. Sheilla Dhar, Mrs. Abdul Hasar, Miss Agha, Mrs. Parul Mullick, Mrs. A. C. Banerji, Mrs. Protiva Mukherji, Mrs. Vahi and others.

Among about a dozen resolutions, which concerned the social status of women, and which were passed unanimously, one urged upon the Government of India the necessity of appointing a commission to enquire into the legal status of women and their rights to inheritance, marriage, divorce and guardianship of children and suggested that the commission should be authorised to make such recommendations as would help to remove women's disabilities and thus enable them to enjoy a status of equality with men. Another resolution aimed at drawing the attention of the Government and local bodies to the deplorable state of women's education in the United Provinces, and suggested measures for the improvement of the same. It noted with regret the total absence of facilities for the education of adult women. As the education of adult women was one of the most important means of propaganda in favour of the education of the young and for improving the conditions of living, the conference recommended that local bodies should take steps to provide adequate facilities for the purpose. The conference here pointed out that for the education of adult women, the 'literacy aim' was still more unsuitable than for children and therefore institutions should impart such education as would be of real use in life for the women concerned. The Prayag Mahila Vidya-pitha was suggested as a model for this.

The conference further passed resolutions demanding a greater representation for women on local bodies. The conference also demanded a greater percentage of the total expenditure on education should be spent on female education than what was now being spent.

It reiterated its previous resolution to lend whole-hearted support to the development of indigenous industries, emphasised that the improvement in the condition of workers was one of the primary objects of the Swadeshi movement and welcomed the growth of trade unions and trusted that it would receive the support of the Government and the people. The conference resolved to confine its purchases to Swadeshi, as far as possible, and to form labour sub-committees in every constituency and sub-constituency to ascertain the conditions of labourers, in local factories and workshops.

The Conference deplored the circumstances which resulted in the withdrawal of the Anti-Untouchability Bill and expressed the hope, in view of the highly intolerable position of the Harijans, that efforts would be made to expedite legislation securing their well-deserved rights for the so-called depressed classes.

## The All India Women's Conference

### Opening Day—Karachi—The 29th December 1934

Amidst scenes of great enthusiasm, the ninth session of the All-India Women's Conference opened on the 29th. December 1934 at the Khalikdina Hall, Karachi before a large gathering. Among those present were Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Dr. Maude Royden, Mrs. Corbett Ashby (both guests from Britain), Rani Rajwade, Mrs. Margaret Cousins, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Lady Hidayatullah, Mrs. Mukherjee, Mrs. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali, Mrs. Lakshmi Menon, Begum Haroon, Miss Bahadurji, Rani Snerkata, Mrs. Hamidali, Mrs. Husim Tyabjee, and Miss Khemchand. Nearly 200 delegates from all over India attended.

Mrs. Homi Mehta, Chairman of the Reception Committee welcomed the delegates.

Rani Lakshmi Bai Rajwade, in proposing Mrs. Rustumji Faridoonji to the chair, referred to Mrs. Faridoonji's work in championing the rights of women.

Lady Hidayatullah seconded and Mrs. Cousins supported the proposal and amidst cheers, Mrs. Faridoonji occupied the chair. In the course of her presidential address which mainly dealt with social and educational problems concerning women, the President said :—

"The women of India suffered in silence for generation and have fulfilled their greater mission and the time has come when we now feel that suffering in silence is doing neither us nor our great Motherland any good whatever. The time has come for us to take the position granted us by God in society, and as citizens of this great land share equally with men in its welfare work." She emphasised the need for medical inspection and medical treatment at school clinics and with a view to speed up the removal of the present inequality urged co-education in primary schools. Mrs. Faridoonji advocated travelling and circulating libraries and the establishment of cultural colleges where girls could go after leaving school and specialise in two or three subjects. One of which should be of a character to enable her to take up some useful occupation. She also wanted full enquiry as to how primary and secondary education should be remodelled.

After referring to social and legal disabilities under which Indian women were suffering, Mrs. Faridoonji said that the most important work for men and women to-day was the attainment of the unity of India. To achieve this she advocated the abolition of communal schools and the adoption of Hindustani as a common language. She also put in a strong plea for Swadeshi. She observed : "If you want a healthy, if you want a manly, self-supporting India buy home industries and thus add to our people's resources." Mrs. Faridoonji considered Indian goods and support the Reforms Report slightly better than the White Paper, though it still fell far short of their demands.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, on behalf of the Conference, extended a warm welcome to Dr. Royden and Mrs. Ashby.

Dr. Royden, acknowledging the welcome, said that a vast mass of British people were interested and sympathetic towards India in a way they had never been be-

fore. There had been great change in the course of the last year or two. The British public had understood what India was aspiring for. When Mr. Gandhi went to England, an enormous amount of interest was evinced in India. As a Lancashire woman, she could say that Lancashire had abiding interest and deep sympathy for India.

Mrs. *Ashby*, who brought a message from the International Women's Organisation said that the time had come when they should consider their problems seriously. It needed the sternest self-discipline and the staunchest loyalty to success in their cause.

Sjt. *Jairamdas Daulatram*, Congress Secretary, was then requested to address the Conference. He said that women were still suffering from inferiority complex. While exhorting Indian women not to copy the West, but evolve along Indian's own way, he struck a note of warning that women were now being asked to get back to kitchen in Italy and Germany. India should stick to her own traditions and evolve out of her own genius. He appealed to women to help Mr. Gandhi's new programme of village reconstruction which was really a women's problem.

Mrs. *Naidu*, proposing vote of thanks, asserted that women were not suffering from inferiority complex. They stood for the country, not for one sect or another.

### Messages of Goodwill

Messages were received, amongst others from the Six Point Group of London, St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance of London, the open Door International for the Economic Emancipation of Women Workers, with branches all over the world and headquarters at London, the Disarmament Committee of the Women's International Organisation at Geneva, the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, London, the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship London, the World's Young Women's Christian Association, Geneva, the International Council of Women and the Associated Country Women of the World, London, and the Merthyr (South Wales) Women's Fellowship.

In addition to the number of messages of congratulation from abroad, the Conference also received several messages from distinguished Indians, notable among them being one from Mahatma Gandhi, written on thick hand-made brown India parchment paper and in which he stated: "I do hope your meeting in Karachi will be a great success and the sisters assembled there will rise above petty quarrels of men, by setting an example of refusing to divide themselves into various groups. Surely, religions are not made to set up quarrels among ourselves. I hope too, that this meeting will give full support to the activities of the newly formed Village Industries Association. It is essentially women's work. Let it not be said of city women that they cared not for their millions of sisters, in the seven lakhs of villages."

Other messages were from the President, Women's Indian Association, Madras, the Rani of Sangli, Mrs. Hakim of Delhi, Begum Shah Nawaz of Lahore, Lady Nilkanth of Ahmedabad, Mrs. Hansa Metha of Bombay, Mrs. P. K. Sen, Mrs. Brijlal Nehru and Mrs. Manecklal Premchand now at Paris, and others.

Mrs. *Ashby*, in her speech at the Conference, extended an invitation to Indian women to send a strong delegation to the next International Women's Conference. She described 1934 as the year in which their women's movement had achieved two triumphs, one in Brazil and the other in Turkey, where women had been granted complete political equality. She looked forward to the year 1935, which would see an enormous number of Indian women wielding great power, as the result of the new reforms. She urged the spirit of co-operation among all for the common good of the world.

### British Women's Messages

Dr. *Maude Royden* and Mrs. *Corbet Ashby*, who had come specially on invitation to attend the All-India Women's Conference, brought special messages of British women to Indian women.

Mrs. *Ashby* had a message signed by 26 representative associations, which says that British women send greetings to their Indian sisters of the All-India Women's Conference. They desire to express their sympathy and admiration for the work Indian women are doing for the social and economic reform and to give the assurance that they will support them in their gallant fight for a greater measure of suffrage and eligibility. The signatories included Dorothy Halifax, wife of Lord Halifax, ex-Viceroy of India. The associations comprised the Association of Head-

mistresses, the British Commonwealth League, the Friend of India League, the Guild House Fellowship and the National Council of Women of Great Britain and the Women's Co-operative Guild.

Miss Royden had two special messages, one from the women of Merthyr, whose husbands were unemployed miners, which said: "The women of the Merthyr Women's Fellowship to the Women of India:

"We of the Merthyr, South Wales, Great British Women's fellowship take the opportunity of Miss Royden's visit to India to send with her to the women of India our sincerest greetings. The economic developments daily bring the nations of the world into closer contact with each other and it is our prayer that the peoples of the world may realise that we are all one family, with common interests and responsibilities and at this season of the year, we can think of no more fitting good wish to the Women of India than loving greetings of peace and goodwill in your rising up and in your lying down, in your walking and in your sleeping, in your going out and in your coming, in your labour and your leisure, in your laughter and in your tears, until the peoples of the earth come to the great day to which there is no sunset and no dawn."

The another message was from the Guild House complementing Indian women on all they have already achieved in the service of their country and sex and invoking God's blessings on the deliberations of the Women's conference.

#### British Visitor's Interviewed

Interviewed by the Associated Press. Dr *Maud Royden* and Mrs. *Corbet Ashby* evinced great interest in the progress made by Indian women.

Mrs. Ashby said that the task of organising Indian women was much more difficult than in England, where they had a smaller country and were more homogeneous. She stressed the need for forming associations in every village of India. Ideas must penetrate from towns to villages.

"Mr. Gandhi's new suggestion for the industrial organisation has special significance for the women of the world," said Mrs. Ashby. "We feel that Indian women have already made such tremendous advance in education and social reform that we expect them to become a big political factor. We feel that Indian women are working towards self-Government at a time when other countries have abandoned democracy". Mrs. Ashby emphasised the great interest and understanding that now existed among the women of England for problems facing the women of India and the great admiration for the work they were doing.

Referring to the European situation and the work of the League of Nations, Mrs. Ashby said that Europe was more heavily armed now than ever before, but a settlement in the Saar between France and Germany was of enormous importance and she thought no Government would dare to make war, because it was afraid of revolution amongst its own people, if it did so. The League's work was so constant and persistent, that in spite of real disasters, it was exercising all the time formidable pressure towards peace.

Asked about the Gandhian gospel of non-violence, Mrs. Ashby said, that "I think that human society works always by stages. In the individual, you get sudden conversion, but not so, in the case of society. Therefore, the way to non-violence between nations is to substitute co-operative force for national force, which is anarchy." Mrs. Ashby added, "Mr. Gandhi has the greatest reputation among single individuals. The British are taking enormous interest in the Indian question and the output of literature on India has grown considerably. I do not think that the fundamentals of the India Bill will be altered, but if constructive amendments were put forward definitely to improve some particular point, then there is a good chance of the House of Commons accepting the same".

Mrs. Ashby concluded: "There is fear in the British mind that if the Reforms which have achieved the greatest amount of support and unanimity amongst all parties is rejected, there is very little chance of any Government of any party colour, having a tremendous majority and the necessary leisure and opportunity, to work out again the solution of so important and complex a problem."

Dr. Royden paid a tribute to Mr. Gandhi's services to humanity and said, "Mr. Gandhi is the greatest living man. I look to this victory over ignorance and fear, as the victory of humanity. I believe his methods will ultimately triumph in the world."



## Second Day—Karachi—31st. December 1934

The second day's sitting of the Conference started at 9 a. m. to-day in the lecture hall of the local D. J. Sind College, under the Presidentship of *Mrs. Faridoonji Rustomji*.

After wishing the Conference success, the President asked the delegates to observe two minutes' silence, which they all did standing.

### Report of Last Year's Work

The annual report was presented by *Mrs. S. C. Mukherji*, Secretary, and adopted by the House. The following is the text:—

"The great need felt by women to express their considered views on social and educational problems, found its expression in the organisation of the All-India Women's Conference. Nine years ago, when it first met in Poona, few of us could have realised the immense possibilities of such an annual gathering of women in rousing women's interests in problems that affect them and their children. The remarkable success with which the Annual Conferences are held, the growing enthusiasm and earnestness of women in finding solution for matters that vitally affect them and their country, the successful attempts made by the Conference as a whole, and the Constituencies in particular, to give practical effect to resolutions formally adopted at the Conferences and the necessary faith in the support of the Conference in all urgent questions—all these show not only the Conference has been doing but the potentialities of an organised body of women seriously interested in problems that affect women and children.

### BIHAR RELIEF COLLECTIONS

From the Constituencies of the Conference funds were raised for the relief of the stricken after the Bihar Earthquake, and the total collection exceeded thirty thousand rupees, although individually the members had already contributed largely to other funds. The Patna Constituency did splendid work in the afflicted areas. From Bombay, some of the members who are doctors, were sent to help in Bihar. Funds were raised in Calcutta by door to door collection and flag day demonstration.

### RESOLUTION ON WOMEN'S FRANCHISE

The following resolution passed by the Conference at its last Session in Calcutta was cabled to the Secretary of the Joint Select Committee and the Secretary of State for India (through our Liaison Officer, *Rajkumari Amrit Kaur*):—

"The Conference reiterates its demands regarding franchise and the state of women in the future Constitution of India as placed before the Joint Select Committee in London by our elected representatives, and fully endorses statements made by them before the same Committee".

The desire for full and free opportunities for the women for service in the new Constitution continues unabated. Inasmuch as the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report regarding our status and women's franchise fall far short of our demands we must record our keen disappointment thereat and resolve to leave no stone unturned to obtain what we consider are our just demands. The Joint Parliamentary Committee Report, as far as it affects the women in the new Constitution, will shortly be considered by the representatives of the Conference along with two other women's organisations.

### LIAISON OFFICER'S WORK

In view of the increasing interest shown by British Women's Organisations, particularly, after our accredited representatives, *Rajkumari Amrit Kaur*, *Mrs. Hamid Ali*, and *Dr. Mrs. Muthulakshmi Reddi* gave evidence before the Joint Select Committee, it was decided to appoint *Rajkumari Amrit Kaur*, as Liaison Officer from the Conference to establish contact with women's organisations abroad, and to secure their support and interest in our aspirations. The presence in our midst as and sympathy shown by the representatives of the British Women's Organisations is eloquent proof of the success of her work. *Mrs. Lankester* was appointed by the British Women's Organisations as a corresponding Liaison Officer to keep in touch with Indian conditions. A bulletin is published by them with



news of the work done by the women of India for their emancipation, so as to create an active interest in England.

A memorandum was presented to the International Labour Conference in Geneva in May last through our Liaison Officer, recommending (1) Maternity Benefits, (2) Raising of minimum age of employment of children, (3) Compulsory provision of Creches, (4) Maximum loads for women, (5) Regulating the employment of children in non-industrial occupations and (6) Abolition of the Jagger system.

The Committee appointed by the Conference composed of Mrs. A. Chatterji, Miss Wingate and Mrs. S. N. Roy visited the Jharia and Asansole mines with a view to eliciting facts and forming an opinion about the elimination of women labour in mines—as recommended by the Royal Commission on Labour. Their Report will be put forward to the Conference this year. Weighing the respective merits and demerits of this elimination after a first hand investigation, they have come to the conclusion that underground women labour should be eliminated, but that simultaneously work should be found for them on the surface and at the same time a minimum wage and minimum hours of work should be fixed for the miner.

The new Factories Act, when it comes into force, although it will improve the condition of labour, has not fully embodied the suggestion of the League of Nations with regard to the age for child labour, Maternity Benefits, Creches, Welfare work, and schools. As regards this matter suggestions have been sent for amendments, and the Labour Sub-Committee is indebted to Mrs. Hamid Ali and Miss Copeland for their help.

#### ALL INDIA WOMEN'S DAY

The All-India day, celebrated on the 24th. November, 1934, to ask for the appointment of the Commission on Legal disabilities of Women, has been a great success. All over the country, in nearly every Constituency of our Conference meetings were held and Lawyers and other prominent men and women spoke supporting the demand. The response and the sympathy that they are receiving so far has been most encouraging. Large number of signatures supporting our demand have been collected from all over. Although we have been very successful so far, the creation of a far wider and intensive demand from the Constituencies for the appointment of the Commission will yet be necessary, and will form a part of our programme for the coming year.

A distinctly new feature of our Conference work this year was the issuing of a Manifesto and questionnaire to candidates contesting elections for the Assembly, and offering to help those who conform to our ideas and ideals. The increased enthusiasm evinced by women at the polling booths during the elections throughout the country is another testimony of the awakened interest of women. It is very unfortunate that no woman contested the elections for the Assembly this time.

#### WORK OF CONSTITUENCIES

So far as the educational work is concerned the successful working of the Lady Irwin College for Home Science is a tangible result of at least some of the cherished hopes of the Conference. In this connection, it is a great satisfaction that several constituencies have raised funds for the scholarships to send pupils for training there.

In the work of the constituencies, the removal of illiteracy has engaged a considerable part of their attentions. Mysore has successfully carried on a plan in towns and attempts are being made to reach every home in every village. New schools have been started. A Five-Year Plan has been submitted to our Conference, which, when carried out, will succeed in removing 50 per cent illiteracy in the Constituency.

Bombay, Delhi, Gwalior, Madras, Hyderabad (Deccan), and Punjab Central Constituencies have undertaken this work of Adult Education with great success. In Bombay and some other places, apart from teaching reading and writing, lectures pertaining to Civics, Franchise and General talks and sanitation have been arranged. Besides Music Schools, Deaf and Dumb Schools and Blind Schools have been started in some Constituencies. Refresher Courses for Primary School Teachers have been arranged in Calcutta. Delhi has started a Co-educational Primary School, and Travancore an orphanage with the help of the State.

Industrial classes and schools have been started by a large number of the Constituencies.

A Women's Hostel has been started at Hyderabad (Deccan) through the efforts of the Constituency.

Under the auspices of some of the Constituencies and with funds supplied by them, parks have been thrown open to women and lectures and games arranged in them.

Suitable syllabus for Girls' Schools have been sent to the Directors of Public Instruction by some Constituencies.

#### SOCIAL WORK

On the social side, Rescue Homes have been started by a few Constituencies and the prevention of immoral traffic in women and children is engaging the interests of many. Mysore, by propaganda and persistent efforts, succeeded in getting a Bill passed. Calcutta had several meetings to create public opinion regarding amendments to the Act passed, to make them effective. Punjab is doing propaganda work for the passage of a Bill now before the Punjab Council on the prevention of immoral traffic.

Attempts have been made by the Calcutta Constituency and some other Constituencies to deal with the problem of the abduction of women, by approaching local officers and Municipal Boards with offers of help in eradicating this evil.

Rural uplift work is also engaging the attention of many of the Constituencies. The Conference would like to show its approval and appreciation of the scheme for training men and women propagandists for village work—which includes a programme of industries, education in Hygiene and medical matters, with practical instruction which has been successfully carried out by Mrs. Hamid Ali at Satara.

We welcome the formation of the All-India Village Industries Association which, we feel, has opened up endless possibilities of constructive work for our members in the field of development of indigenous industries. This is a work which has always been in the forefront of our programme and we shall look forward to doing our share in a labour which will ensure some economic relief to the increasingly poor villagers.

It is reported by the Travancore Constituency that a Home for the destitute and infirm to tackle the beggar problem is proposed to be started. Similar work has been undertaken by Hyderabad (Deccan).

The training of nurses and dais has always been a point of the Conference programme, and Maternity Hospitals have also been established in one or two Constituencies recently. An Anti-Tuberculosis Dispensary has been started under the auspices of the Jullundur Sub-Constituency (with municipal aid).

An enquiry has been made during the year and it is proposed to approach the authorities to restrict the sale of opium. It is terrible to think of the infant mortality as well as the injurious effect it has on the health of so many of the children of the poor for statistics go to show that a large percentage of opium is consumed in nearly every province and is administered to children. We have to thank Mrs. Hamid Ali for the work she has been doing in the matter and for arousing the interest of the Conference in regard to this vital problem.

#### ENFORCEMENT OF SARDA ACT

So far as the Sarda Act is concerned, a special All-India Women's Committee was formed at the last half-yearly meeting at Indore to popularise it and to do propaganda against child-marriage and to devise ways and means to improve the Act. The way the Act is being flagrantly violated, makes it all the more necessary for us to lay special stress on the matter, and during the year our efforts will be redoubled in this direction.

Temperance work, slum work, relief of lepers, propaganda for censorship of films and film-posters, and a variety of other work according to local needs and conditions are engaging the attention of our Constituencies.

A list of indigenous industries of the various provinces has been prepared by the Sub-Committee of the Conference and suggestions sent for promoting the sale of these articles.

The Text-Book Sub-Committee of the Conference has submitted a scheme of studies for practical subjects in Girls' Schools. They are making the catalogue prepared by them last year an All-India type by inclusion of books in various languages.

Out of 37 Constituencies with Sub-Constituencies, encouraging report have been received from as many as 30 Constituencies and Sub-Constituencies of the year's

work. In every Constituency, it is found, a growing number of women are interested in the cause of educational and social reform and anxious to help us.

In education, the Conference has consistently stood for and endeavoured towards Compulsory Primary Education, co-education and the liquidation of mass illiteracy. In social matters the attitude of the Conference has always been and will be one of progressive reconstruction. It is not satisfied with half-hearted measures of reform. It stands for the amendment of Sarda's Child Marriage Restraint Act so that child marriage will be made impossible. It stands for the removal of legal disabilities of women, for the enactment of juster laws, which give women a more generous status in life. Further it stands for the amelioration of condition of life in fields, factories, and mines of our country. That its achievement so far has fallen short of the ideal does not diminish our faith or devotion to our ideals.

### Reading of Papers

Over half a dozen papers on diverse topics were read by delegates and adopted by the Conference. They included the report on the Social section read by *Mrs. S. N. Roy*, the report of the Liaison Officer read by *Mrs. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur*, the report of the Fund Association of the Lady Irwin Home Science College of Delhi, read by its Principal, *Mrs. Hannah Sen*, the report of the Constitutional Sub-Committee read by *Miss Bahadurji*, the report of the Text Books Sub-Committee read by *Mrs. S. N. Sen*, the report of the Education Sub-Committee read by *Miss Leilawati Naidu*, and the report of the Sarda Act Sub-Committee by *Mrs. Hamid Ali*.

Besides these a valuable report was read by *Mrs. S. N. Roy* of Calcutta which referred to the findings of the Sub-Committee on the condition of labour and specially the state of labour in the mines of India. This Sub-Committee consisted of *Mrs. A. Chatterjee* and *Miss Wingate*, besides *Mrs. Roy* and their report which was based on personal observations, was highly complimented by the Conference.

### RESOLUTIONS—INTRODUCTION OF CO-EDUCATION

At its sitting this afternoon, the Conference declared itself emphatically against the introduction of co-education in secondary schools by defeating the official resolution passed by the Subjects Committee, urging universal co-education. The latter resolution stated that proper encouragement of co-education would help greatly towards the solution of the various social and economic problems confronting the country and, therefore, strongly urged that (a) co-education be introduced wherever possible, (b) a large proportion of women teachers be always appointed on staffs of co-educational institutions, particularly those of primary schools and (c) at least one of the supervisors employed by local self-governing bodies be women.

This official resolution was moved in an able speech by *Mrs. Janaki Charry* of Travancore who, claiming to address the Conference as a plain woman, asserted that the only way of improving the present slow progress of Indian women was co-education, which would also convert the whole country into one family.

The resolution was seconded by *Miss G. J. Bahadurji* of Bombay, who stated that recent discoveries in psychology had proved that co-education helped in forming the child's personality far better than segregated education and prevented the mystery of sex constantly intruding itself on the consciousness of both boys and girls when they grew older. It would also check estrangement between husbands and wives noticed in several cases.

*Miss Arlick*, supporting, felt that co-education would bring about the entire abolition of the Purdah and sex embarrassment and would contribute to the chiselling and polishing of the ways of the "opposite sex." "Manners maketh a man". How else could a man achieve this end, if he was not stimulated and inspired by the influence of the purity and integrity of the woman nearby? It would bring about true partnership and equality between man and woman, which was the ideal of the Conference.

The resolution was further supported by *Mrs. Cousins* and *Miss Vindri Thadhani* of Hyderabad (Sind), the former stating that co-education was most homely and natural.

The resolution evoked a spirited protest in Urdu from *Miss Zafar Hussain* of Delhi who frankly acknowledged that she warned the Conference against committing the fatal mistake of co-education.

The resolution was further supported by *Rajkumari Amrit Kaur* of Jullunder but *Miss Narsian* of Karachi attacked it, strongly opposing co-education in secondary schools from the psychological point of view but favouring co-education in primary schools and colleges.

Miss *J.E. Copeland* of Delhi submitted an amendment against co-education in secondary schools only. Speaking of her personal experience of co-education in her native country of Scotland, she was against its introduction in secondary schools.

The amendment was supported by Mrs. *Hamid Ali* of Bombay Presidency, and Mrs. *Rukmani Amma* of Mysore.

The main resolution was now opposed by Mrs. *Kalandarali Khan* of Punjab (Central) and Mrs. *Kothiwan* of the Central Provinces (south).

Dr. (Miss) *Ferozdin* of Lahore moved an amendment opposing co-education in both colleges and secondary schools but favoured it in primary schools, provided the latter schools were entirely staffed by women teachers. She was seconded by another Muslim, Mrs. *Abdul Karim*. The amendment was, however, defeated.

The amendment of Miss *Copeland*, favouring co-education only in colleges and primary schools was carried by a huge majority, as against the original resolution advocating universal co-education, which did not get more than 10 votes.

#### PHYSICAL FITNESS OF WOMEN

Earlier, the Conference passed unanimously the following resolution, moved from the chair :—

"In the opinion of this Conference, education is incomplete without due regard to the physical fitness for the women and children of India. It, therefore, requests the Government and all local bodies to provide adequate provision in schools and colleges for playgrounds and reiterates its demand for compulsory medical inspection under the supervision of qualified doctors, with adequate provision for necessary treatment.

"As progress in education is mainly dependent on the efficacy of teachers, on whom the number is, at present, insufficient, this Conference urges the establishment of more training colleges for women."

### Third Day—Karachi— the 1st January 1935

#### REMOVAL OF LEGAL BARRIER

To-day's proceedings of the All-India Women's Conference were marked by spirited speeches demanding the removal of legal barriers under which women suffered, assertion of right of inheritance to family property and warm support for the Village Industries Association scheme launched by Mr. Gandhi. Resolutions on the subjects were unanimously passed, a large number of Moslem ladies participating in the discussion.

#### J. P. C. REPORT CONDEMNED

The Conference next passed the following resolution :—

"Whereas the J. P. C. Report on the White Paper as a whole and in particular, where its recommendations concerning the status of women in the new Constitution falls far short of our demands, we do hereby state in unequivocal language our strong disapproval of and inability to accept the same."

In a statement giving reasons for dissatisfaction, the Conference deplored absence of declaration of rights in which removal of sex disabilities should be clearly stated.

The Conference lodged a protest against the method of enfranchisement of women proposed by the J. P. C., namely, enfranchisement of wives and widows of property holders, as well as wives of men with military service qualifications and pensioned widows and mothers of military officials and soldiers. The Conference also protested against invidious differentiations made between provinces, and with regard to literacy and property qualifications. The Conference, while reiterating their conviction on the principle that they were opposed to reservation of seats in legislatures for women or any particular interest, deplored the entire omission of women from Assemblies in several provinces and total exclusion of women in N. W. F. Province from citizenship rights, including franchise.

The Conference further protested against the omission of a definite place in all second chambers as well as in the Council of State for women. The Conference



objects with all possible emphasis to indirect election. The Conference also refused to accept nomination of women for legislatures.

Concluding, the Conference observed: "While mentioning the above details we wish to make it quite clear even if we had secured and if at the same time we felt the recommendations as a whole were not in the interests of India, we would, as women and the natural guardians of future generations, feel it our bounden duty to deny all special privileges for ourselves for the sake of the common good.

"In the light of general criticisms of the Report, we know the recommendations are unacceptable to all shades of representative opinion in the country. We, therefore, join in this universal protest and still hope that the new constitution may eventually be created as will meet with general approbation."

#### BIRTH-CONTROL

The Conference next passed a resolution by 50 votes to 20, declaring that the Conference was more than ever convinced that on account of the low standard of physique of women, high infant mortality and increasing poverty in the country, instructions in methods of birth control through recognised clinics were necessary.

Moving the resolution on birth control Mrs. Sarojini Mehta said since they introduced this resolution last year several constituencies had tried to work out this problem and were on their way to take practical steps by trying to establish birth-control clinics. The most common argument levelled against birth-control was that it tended to spread immorality. But there were good and bad uses of everything we had in society. Even things like money and education could be used and misused.

"It was very unfair to society to prevent it from having the use of beneficial things because a few individuals would misuse it". Mrs. Mehta said, "Even if we accepted that birth-control would spread immorality I ask you, Ladies, is it not more immoral to bring into this world children to whom neither parents nor society can give food, clothing or shelter—bare necessities of life? Is it not immoral to bring forth a race which has not the slightest chance of getting even elementary education, of ever gaining ordinary civic rights? Moreover, is it not a social crime to compel women to undergo death-pangs of child-birth against her wishes? Another argument is that birth-control is artificial and against nature and as such should not be advocated. I believe all civilisation—even in its primary stage—is a revolt against nature. Is it not against nature to wear clothes or to eat cooked food or live in houses?"

The speaker continued: "The whole human life is a long struggle against the forces of nature. It is also argued that contraceptive methods were harmful to woman's health. But I can assure you they could never be more harmful than too frequent confinements. There are many people who accept the principle of birth-control but say that the right way is to advocate continence and not contraceptives. They cite Mahatma Gandhi as example but if it was possible for every ordinary person to achieve what the Mahatma has achieved, India would become a Heaven on earth. And if you have read his autobiography you would have seen that even the Mahatma achieved his goal after a long struggle and after twenty-three years of married life. The Hindu religion has been preaching Brahmacharya since times immemorial and yet how many have put it into practice? It is also argued by opponents of birth-control that if unmarried woman and widows could practise abstinence for the whole of their life why could not married women observe it for a few years intermittently? But a married woman has to consider this question of her husband also, with whom she has to spend her whole life. Psychologists will tell you that by putting artificial restraints on physical relations of husband and wife there is every likelihood of estrangement between them.

"One of the causes of appalling number of deaths among children under one year is that mother's constitution becomes too weak with frequent child-births and she is not in a position to give birth to healthy children. By opposing birth-control we will be guilty of allowing so many lives to be lost—lives both of mothers and of children." Concluding Mrs. Mehta said: "I also have to sound a note of warning to the opponents. I know by experience women who are tired of too frequent child-births take resort to quacks with the result they do greater harm to themselves and to society. If birth-control clinics are not established this sort of thing will increase. Do not for a moment imagine you will be able to make people practice celibacy by opposing birth-control. You will only thrust them in the hands of quacks." (Loud cheers).



The Press, which was already screened behind purdah for the last two days was told off this afternoon, when the Conference took up for consideration birth control.

#### POLYGAMY CONDEMNED

Among other resolutions adopted by the Conference, was one strongly disapproving polygamy and appealing to women not to marry a man, who has a wife living. While expressing themselves in favour of the resolution, Moslem ladies wished to make it clear that polygamy was permitted by Islam in cases of strictest necessity, for example, in case of there being no issue through the first marriage.

#### OTHER RESOLUTIONS

As many as fourteen resolutions were adopted, including one favouring Hindustani as the common language, in moving which resolution *Rani Rajwade* said that no other country had adopted a foreign language as the medium of expression except India.

Mrs. *Asaf Ali*, seconding, said that the lead given by the Conference, would be followed by other organisations in the country.

A resolution urging compulsory mass education throughout India was moved by *Miss Nanjamma* of Mysore who instanced the case of Russia which liquidated illiteracy through a five-year plan.

The *Rani of Sherkote*, seconding, appealed to Indian Princes to make education compulsory in their States.

The Conference passed a resolution, which ran:—"Realising how gravely progress of education in the country is hampered by lack of co-operation between parents and teachers, the Conference appeals to all parents and guardians and teachers to help in this direction and urge the Conference constituencies to give them support and co-operation."

Speaking on the resolution for the removal of disabilities of women, *Sri Kamaladevi* made a forceful speech and said that the laws of every country reflected the constitution of society. No laws were created by a sheer accident. Progress did not depend upon the period when the laws were drafted. Some of the very old laws could be extremely liberal, while some latest enactments could be reactionary. She emphasised that they should have a clear idea of what changes were needed in the constitution of society. She instanced the case of Turkey, where radical transformation had taken place in society, because Mustafa Kemal struck at the very root of social inequality by entirely changing the old order of things. Mere changes in the statute book would not do but social outlook must also change in order to make the enactments effective. Before the new Fascist State came in Germany, its women were enjoying certain privileges won by hard struggle, but that was all lost when radical change was brought in. The speaker appealed to public-spirited bodies and organisations for the formation of social centres and also for voluntary workers to come forward.

Mrs. *Zaffar Hussain* seconded.

Mrs. *Jairamdas Doulatram* said that it was a fair scheme in which women especially should co-operate. They should not talk of cities but go to villages which formed ninety per cent of India. Ours was a starving country. The average income of an American was fifty times that of the average Indian, and of an Englishman twenty-five times. What the average Indian earned in a year was spent at one night's attendance at a cinema in London. Concluding the speaker said that they should fight the demon of illiteracy and forces which were unsympathetic. She lamented that women of cities were not acquainted with the great distress prevailing in the countryside.

*Sri Kamaladevi* said that if they wanted to take the question of cottage industries in India, it was impossible to isolate any one particular item in the economic life from the rest of rural economic life. If they wanted villages to benefit they would take the entire question of rural upliftment.

The resolution was unanimously adopted.

Moving the resolution on Parental Co-operation in education, *Mrs. Patkai*, a Moslem lady, said women were taking precious little care of the education of children and were leaving matters entirely in the hands of teachers who beat them and maltreated them. *Mrs. Cousins* said that women who did home work had the right to demand economic privileges and instanced the case of Japan and America where there was complete co-operation between teachers and parents the lack of which characterised the education in India.

## DEBATING SOCIETIES

The Conference next passed a resolution urging the necessity of formation of debating societies to serve as training ground for stimulating discussion of matters of public interest and efficient expression of thought and speech.

*Rajkumari Amrit Kaur*, mover of this resolution, said that women have no opportunity of public speaking and therefore it was necessary not only for debating societies for women alone, but mixed debating societies also.

*Mrs. Corbett Ashby* supporting the resolution, said that from the smallest group to the biggest gathering women must cultivate the habit of speaking. This practice was essential if they wanted to carry out their rights and responsibilities. She also stressed the need for discipline and learning proper procedure which was the same whether at a tiny meeting or at a big gathering. Some of them might be chosen to represent India in the League of Nations and if they were acquainted with the procedure it would be helpful.

By way of advice, *Mrs. Ashby* said that if any speaker wanted to speak for an hour, she must prepare for five minutes but if she wanted to speak for five minutes, she must prepare for an hour. She also advised women to take pains for collecting information, conducting research and not fight shy of blue books and Government publications.

The resolution was carried.

The Conference adopted a resolution on the passing away of the Dowager Maharani of Mysore.

## VILLAGE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION

*Rajkumari Amrit Kaur*, moving the resolution on Village Industries Association, made an eloquent speech saying that in that resolution they had the crystallisation of all the resolutions which they had been urging for the last nine years. They should place village reconstruction work in the fore-front of their programme. She knew some of the constituencies had tried to do work in the villages but the attempt had been spasmodic and they were not able to give concentrated thought to the problem in villages. Now in the greater interests of India, the Village Industries Association had been formed and it was a non-political organisation formed entirely for the economic hygiene and moral uplift of the villages. It was a great opportunity for the Conference to identify itself with the work that would be in progress in India shortly. The main object of the Association was to make villages self-supporting.

*Mrs. Feroz Din* said it was not in human nature to give rights to women. They had to wrest every inch. They should raise the revolt and fight for themselves. "Islam says Paradise lies under the feet of women, but how can the women of the present create Heaven when they were suffering from too many disabilities?"

*Mrs. Cousins* emphasised that women must have some part in property, and a proper share of whatever money came into the possession of the family must be rendered to women.

*Mrs. Chatur Singh* said that men merely called women "Rani" and "Light of their eyes" but conferred no rights in practice. The speaker added that man-made laws should be shattered.

## Women and Congress

A chide to Congress for not having backed up women candidates in the Assembly elections and even for bye-elections was administered by *Mrs. Margaret Cousins* at a largely attended public meeting at Karachi, *Dr. Choitram*, President, Sind Provincial Congress Committee, presiding. Women were pressed and persuaded into jails. Congress must equally press them into Legislatures and thus show honour to women who made equal sacrifices with men.

*Mrs. Kamaladevi* said that freedom for India could only mean complete independence by transfer of power from classes to masses. This was not possible so long as leadership remained in the hands of the upper middle classes, for they had vested interests which were inextricably mixed up with British Imperialism.

*Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali* made an appeal for unity within the Congress ranks and stop all hair-splitting arguments. She opined it was possible to achieve unity in India not only through political pacts but by healthy social and cultural contacts. She added if they could not conquer this obstacle in the way of their goal they could not overcome the greater obstacles facing them,

### Fourth Day—Karachi—2nd. January 1935

A vehement protest against the tyranny perpetrated on Baluchi women through such customs as Bhajai (giving away the wife of a deceased person to his heirs), Khoon Vaha (taking away by force sisters and daughters of a murderer by aggrieved party), Ta Badulla (interchange of children in marriage, even before they were born)". were voiced to-day in the Conference.

Mrs. *Hamid Ali*, moving the resolution<sup>?</sup> on the subject, gave a graphic picture of the appalling social condition and demanded that all impediments in the way of social workers and education be removed.

Mrs. *Asaf Ali* said that century-old customs required eradication. There was a great restraint on the freedom of speech even on Maulavies, so that their grievances could not be ventilated openly. Not only should the resolution be passed, but demands should be made of Government to remove the restrictions barring social progress.

*Sri Kamaladevi* said that the resolution before them was a pious one and did not take into account real conditions in that province. No reforming movement had been possible there because the authorities did not show any enthusiasm but antagonism. Newspapers had been prohibited and entry of outside papers restricted. In a population of ten lakhs, there were only three high schools and 100 primary schools. The speaker emphasised the necessity of creating public opinion on the border districts.

#### WOMEN IN MINES

A full-dress debate ensued on the resolution protesting against the horrible condition of women in mines and urging measures for eradicating their lot. The Conference, while urging the betterment of their lot such as greater facilities for recreation, resolved that a compulsory system of insurance for women working in mines should be instituted to which men and women should contribute payment of premium.

Miss. *Copeland*, speaking in Urdu, dwelt on the cheerless surroundings of those working in mines. More joy and entertainment, she said, should be brought into their lives by the introduction of magic lanterns, cinemas, etc. The speaker asked, "How many Indian women who went to London knew the condition of their sisters in mines?"

Miss *Vingate* and Mrs. *Cousins* also spoke, the latter urging some women to go and settle down in these areas. Mrs. *Cousins* observed: "Here is a kingdom for some woman to become a queen over."

Mrs. *Roy*, mover of the resolution, made an elaborate speech touching all the aspects of the problem.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

Another resolution urging enforcement of the Sarda Act was moved from the chair, Mrs. *Naidu* temporarily occupying the chair at this stage.

Mrs. *Hamid Ali*, explaining the implications, observed that the initiative should be taken by the Government to bring to book those who violated the Act.

*Rani Rajwade* said those who escaped into French territories and Native States with a view to evading the provisions should also be punished.

#### ABDUCTION OF WOMEN

Another interesting resolution passed by the Conference dealt with the abduction of women and children of which Miss *Shepherd* moved an amendment. The draft resolution, she said, was not complete and constructive. She emphasised the need for moral education. She traced the history of this cruel iniquity in India and referred to the League of Nations' effort to wipe it out. Outlining the plans to get this scandal removed, she urged for regional conferences.

Mrs. *Sen* observed that the problem was not only Indian but universal. In the West they were fighting against the crime tooth and nail and referred to the League's efforts to eradicate the evil. The speaker continued: Abductions took place mainly for catering to the animal passion of the general public who want to pay for it. Forcibly abducted women when they come back were ostracised by society and maltreated. In the Punjab and Bengal abduction was on the increase but thanks to

physical culture imparted to girls, such as playing lathi and fencing, they knew how to protect themselves.

*Miss Ferozuddin* declared that the problem was particularly acute in Baluchistan and the Frontier.

*Miss Vora* drew the attention of the Conference to the state of affairs in Kathiawar.

The resolution was ultimately adopted.

In another resolution, the Conference expressed its profound indignation and disappointment at the omission of the right of franchise of women candidates for election to the legislatures of Bengal, Assam, N. W. F. Province, Delhi and Ajmere-Merwara.

#### ISTAMBUL CONFERENCE

Before adjourning for lunch, the Conference unanimously resolved to send Indian delegates to attend the All-Women's Suffrage Alliance Conference at Istambul in April 1935. Since the All-India Women's Conference was not an affiliated body they could only go as fraternal delegates but this impediment was overcome by the Conference resolving to get themselves affiliated.

Mrs. Hamid Ali, Rani Rajwade, Mrs. Naidu, Mrs. Rustomji Faridoonji, Miss Kamaluddin, Mrs. S. N. Roy and Sri Kamaladevi were suggested for the delegation, but the final choice was left to the Committee of the Conference. The Conference then concluded.

Dr. Mande Royden, on behalf of Mrs. Corbett Ashby, thanked the Conference for enabling them to understand something of their desires and aspirations though the language problem had been a handicap. They had learnt not only about women of India but something about India.

*Rani Rajwade* thanked the distinguished visitors from England for gracing the occasion with their presence. While deeply appreciating the love and sympathy of brothers and sisters across the Seas for India, she said that the economic conditions of India were such that Indians could not wait for such sympathies being translated into action and their impatience should not be mistaken for hostility.

Winding up, the President, Mrs. Rustomji Faridoonji, made a passionate appeal for Swadeshi.

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# The European Polity

## THE MADRAS EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION

Addressing a meeting of the European Association held in Madras on the 17th. September 1934 *Mr. F. E. James* emphasised the fact that the European community was united on the question of the safeguards necessary in the event of the transfer of Law and Order to responsible Ministers.

And endeavour, he said, had recently been made both in Madras and in Bombay to create the impression that the community was divided on this point. That was not the case. The Memorandum submitted by the European Association to the Joint Select Committee, the evidence given by the witnesses and the subsequent communication sent on the 28th August 1933 summarising the position, were clear and unmistakable. In the view of the Association the only satisfactory means of safeguarding the effectiveness of the Police to deal with terrorism and similar movements was the reservation of the Intelligence or Special Branches dealing with terrorist and other subversive movements to the Governor-General in his discretion. Europeans in Bengal felt specially strongly on this matter and they had behind them the support of the European community throughout India. Their attitude to the recommendations of the Joint Committee in regard to the Police would depend upon the adequacy of the safeguards proposed. The European Association did not claim the last word in wisdom upon the subject. It might be that the Joint Select Committee would recommend safeguards which were not quite the same as those proposed by the European Association. If, although different, they were found on examination to be as effective as those recommended by the Europeans in India, they should be accepted. If, however, they were found to be weaker than those recommended by the European witnesses, then the whole attitude of the community towards transfer of Law and Order would have to be very carefully examined. Safeguards were not designed for placid circumstances. They were intended to be designed to meet the stress of the most unfavourable and difficult circumstances, such, for example, as pertain in Bengal. This had always been the view of the Europeans in those provinces where conditions were much more satisfactory than in Bengal and was utterly unjust to suggest that the community did not support their brethren in Bengal where conditions were bound to increase apprehension and strengthen the demand for watertight safeguards.

### ASSEMBLY'S RECORD OF WORK

Turning to the Assembly which had closed its session, Mr. James spoke of its varied and constructive work. The passage of the Iron and Steel Bill had provided an opportunity of demonstrating the value of co-operation between Indian and European parties in the interests of India. European Group in the Assembly had taken a prominent part in the discussion of that Bill, a part which had won the commendation of the other Indian parties. They had forced Government to relinquish their plan of abandoning the revenue duties on structurals. They had extracted from Government a clear and irrevocable statement as to the temporary nature of the excise duty on steel ingots. They had safeguarded the position of the smaller branches of the industry; and they had generally strengthened the measure of protection for another period of seven years to the iron and steel industry in this country.

Some comment had been aroused by Sir Leslie Hudson's statement during the debate that Imperial preference as generally understood was dead. This statement was made when showing the difference between a system of differential duties and a system of Imperial preference. The former were imposed in the interest of India; the latter was a scheme in the interests of the Empire. Imperial preference had given way to the Ottawa method which was the conclusion of treaties between Empire countries giving reciprocal tariff advantages on the basis of hard bargains. It was a



tribute to the common sense and statesmanship of Empire countries that the Ottawa Agreements, with all their imperfection were concluded. India stood to gain more by staying outside. The Ottawa agreement did not lessen the need for India to obtain equally favourable Agreements with other countries outside the Empire. They showed the way however to a reduction of tariff based upon the interdependence of the units of the Empire. If the same system were followed on an international scale world trade would very soon revive.

Mr. James referred to two important measures which were part of general Reform programme "by means of which India would attain the ultimate status of a Dominion". By the Indian Navy Bill the Indian Marine was promoted to the status of a Navy and Indian officers were to hold naval commissions under an Act of the Indian Legislature. The Indian Army Bill not only gave the new Indian officer graduating from Dehra Dun a position equal to that of any British or Dominion Officer but it also induced the Army Council to amend the King's regulations so that the Indian official might actually have power of command where circumstances allowed over British troop serving with his own. Mr. James asserted that there was not any other Power in the world which would sanction such an arrangement for the inhabitants of any of its dependencies. It was strange that these two Bills should have been opposed on purely constitutional and technical grounds. If the matter had been left to those with army experience it would have been settled in a very short time. Politicians and lawyers with little knowledge of army affairs dominated the Assembly and in the case of the Indian Army Bill nearly threw it out. It was not surprising therefore that the Commander-in-Chief should show some irritation with those tactics.

#### RUBBER CONTROL

Mr. James referred to the tremendous progress of civil aviation foreshadowed in the proposals placed before the Standing Finance Committee involving an expenditure of 92 lakhs. He also referred to the passing of the Rubber Control Bill by the Assembly and said that the step which had been taken together with the modification which he had secured in that Bill were unanimously endorsed at the Planters meeting in Coonoor. "The Madras Mail" continued to misunderstand the matter. The position was that the case for a revision of the quota would be placed before the International Committee by the non-official representative of the Government of India. That case would be supported by the Governments of Travancore, Cochin, the Rubber Licensing Committee and the United Planters' Association of Southern India. He believed that the International Committee would not be unreasonable and that other producing countries particularly in the Empire might be willing to make adjustments in regard to a quota in favour of South India in order to strengthen the spirit of international co-operation which was so essential to the carrying out of a rubber restriction scheme. He emphasised the fact that any break-down in the scheme either partial or whole would damage India's interest most.

In connection with the approaching elections, Mr. James observed that the Congress stood for a policy of repudiation of the White Paper with all its attendant circumstances. He referred to the election campaign of Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chetty and Mr. Ramaswamy Mudaliar. Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chetty was a Nationalist who had followed the course of constructive criticism. As the President of the Assembly he had been outstanding by reason of his independence of judgment and impartiality of ruling. Mr. Ramaswamy Mudaliar was also a Nationalist who believed in constructive co-operation when that was in the interest of India. These gentlemen were being opposed in their elections by the Congress which stood for non-co-operation in constitutional matters for breaking up the policy of Indo-British co-operation in recent years in economic affairs, and for a policy of economic and political isolation and racial domination which would be disastrous to India. If the Congress secured a clear majority in the Assembly the consequence upon the prospects of Reforms and upon the political situation in England would be serious. A Congress majority would mean the rejection of the White Paper and therefore of the Joint Select Committee Report, a gesture which would be seized upon with avidity by the diehard community in England. It would also mean a reversal of the Ottawa method with attendant dislocation and uncertainty to India's trade, and a policy frankly antagonistic to the continuance of British interests in India. He hoped that in Madras, at any rate, the issue would be made perfectly clear so that the electors would know their choice.

He prophesied a fair future for Madras under the Reforms and emphasised the paramount need for effective organisation and constant vigilance on the part of the European community. They would have to depend entirely upon their own resources, in the politics of the future and that was why such care was being taken to evolve a political organisation which would secure to them both the defence and the representation of their interests and a constructive force which would be open to co-operation with other constructive forces in the country.

## THE ST. ANDREW'S DAY DINNER

*His Excellency Sir John Woodhead*, Acting-Governor of Bengal in the course of his speech at the St. Andrew's Day Dinner held in Calcutta on the 30th. November 1934, said :—

I do not propose to enlarge this field to-night by taking about proposals for Constitutional Reform. The report of the Joint Select Committee, which was set up by both Houses of Parliament to consider, in consultation with representatives from India, the proposals of His Majesty's Government for an Indian Constitution, was published just over a week ago. The recommendations of that Committee are now before Parliament and it would be improper for me at this stage, before they have been considered by Parliament, to discuss them. Like you, Mr. Chairman, I also am a cautious man and though my reason is not the same as yours, I too have decided that to-night no kind of horse shall drag from me an expression of opinion on the proposals of the Report. They are the result of discussions and enquiries which have been going on for the last seven years ever since the Simon Commission came to India. The final discussions will take place in Parliament within the next few months. It is impossible to evolve a constitution which will meet with universal approval and so I will only express the hope that when the financial discussion is over, all those who desire to see India progress steadily towards responsible Government will put their shoulders to the wheel and do their best to ensure that the great constitutional change proceeds smoothly along the lines laid down by Parliament. In the meantime—and I say this with all solemnity—a heavy responsibility will lie on anyone, either in this country or in the United Kingdom, who advocates a sterile policy of rejection without suggesting any constructive alternative. Such a policy, if effected, could only have the effect of putting back the clock for many years.

As regards our purely domestic problems I shall have time to deal briefly only with the two most important, namely terrorism and the economic situation, and it is a happy sign that in the last twelve months two committees, one entirely non-official and the other largely so, have been formed to co-operate and work with the Government towards the solution of both of them.

Although since last November the Province has been saved, only as if by a miracle, from the dreadful tragedy of a murdered Governor, I am able to say without hesitation that to-day the position in regard to terrorism shows a marked improvement on what it was a year ago. The lack of success by the terrorists, the successes of the police in unearthing terrorist conspiracies and bringing terrorists to justice, the large mass of information now available in many districts, though as yet by no means in all, and the considerable finds of arms and explosives all point their own moral. The steady and continuous pressure exerted during the last four years is proving successful. But do not misunderstand me, that does not mean that the pressure can be relaxed. It must be maintained till the terrorist movement has been brought completely under control.

Up till a short time ago Government was left to fight this evil practically single-handed. This was the first phase of the fight and I take this opportunity of paying an unstinted tribute to the devotion to duty displayed by all officers of the Crown, both European and Indian, during a period not only of great strain but also of great danger. I should like also, on behalf of the Civil power, to pay a similar tribute to the military for the great assistance they have rendered. Their relations both with the Provincial Government and the public have been such as to add to the already high repute of the Army in India and it may be of reassurance to those who consider that their continued presence is essential to know that they will not be withdrawn without the consent of the Government of Bengal.

I think that historians will probably say that the attempt on the life of Sir John Anderson was the turning-point in the sorry history of the shameful terrorist

movement. From the moment when the staggering news of the wicked and determined attempt to kill Sir John became known, the tide of public opinion definitely began to flow against the terrorist and will, I trust, never ebb.

The great anti-Terrorist Conference in the Town Hall last September, attended by persons from all over the Province, was proof of a remarkable change in public opinion. It is no over-statement to say that a year or two ago such a meeting would have been unthinkable. But that meeting is not the only sign of a notable change in public opinion. In many of the districts where terrorism is active, non-official organisations are at work helping in the fight and so we have at last embarked on the second phase in the struggle without reaching which success was impossible, namely, Government working with the aid of a vigorous public opinion. I take this opportunity of publicly thanking those who had the courage and strength of mind to call and organise the anti-Terrorist Conference and all those, including many journalists, who are taking part in the anti-Terrorist campaign and to say that Government whole-heartedly welcomes their co-operation and in future will co-operate to the fullest extent possible with them.

The third and final phase of the campaign will be when every house in Bengal is closed to the terrorist, when every finger is pointed at him in scorn and every eye looks on him with loathing so that for very shame he mends his ways and turns his energies to constructive work for his country's good instead of into channels which can only lead into destruction.

To turn to the economic situation I will first deal with that aspect of it which has a bearing on terrorism—the problem of middle-class unemployment. Though opinions may differ as to the extent of the connection between unemployment among the educated classes and terrorism, many people are convinced that the gloom which the fear of unemployment casts even the economic outlook of the Hindu middle-class is one of the causes which has rendered the general atmosphere so favourable to the spread of terrorist doctrines.

It is always difficult to break away from tradition but there are signs of change, indications that Bhadralog to run away from clerical employment. One indication of this change is the number of middle-class young men who have seized the opportunities afforded by the Government Demonstration Parties to receive a training in various handicrafts, such as the making of umbrellas, boots and shoes and soap, as well as weaving and brass and bell metal work.

To-night, in this room, there are many employers and I wish to appeal to them to see what they can do to assist the Bhadralog young men of Bengal to enter new trades and callings.

As regards the general economic sphere the world is recovering slowly from a trade depression which has lasted for nearly 5 years. Railway earnings are generally a good barometer of trade conditions and the increase in railway receipts of nearly Rs. 3 crores up to the beginning of this month compared with figures for the corresponding period last year, which in their turn were 88 lakhs better than in 1932 indicate that India is sharing in that recovery. In Bengal the price of rice has shown a welcome upward trend during the last few months.

A year ago to-night Sir John Anderson announced the decision to set up a Board of Economic Enquiry in order to facilitate co-operation between Government and outside opinion in the solving of economic problems. Government have just received a report from the Board together with a draft Bill for debt conciliation which will be examined by Government as quickly as possible.

#### Chairman's Address

Proposing the toast of "The Viceroy and the land We live in", *Mr. J. A. McKerrow*, Chairman of the St. Andrews' Day dinner congratulated the Governor Sir John Anderson, upon his escape "from the hands of cowardly assassins" adding: "I have no feelings of pity for a gang of plotters, who, by guile, destroy morals and then mortal bodies. So long as these gangs can find a safe asylum in Bengal, it is difficult for plain citizens or men who believe in ordered government better than chaos to understand how local public opinion which tolerates them in its midst can be trusted to take charge of Government."

"None of us will get all we want under the new legislation" added *Mr McKerrow*. "I would remind you why our Parliament was united with the English

one. We were very far from getting all we wanted—so were the English. But will any of you venture at this time in history to say that our union was a mistake ?” Mr. McKerrow concluded with an appeal for belief in the union of the Empire and envisaged a time when there would be a Senior Council of the Empire, wherein representatives of all units would sit together and legislate for the Empire as a unity.

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## The Calcutta European Association Dinner

A large and distinguished assemblage listened to a most important speech made by His Excellency the Viceroy at a dinner given by the European Association in Calcutta on the 19th. December 1934.

Giving expression to the considered views of the Council of the European Association on the J. P. C. Report, *Mr. W. W. K. Page*, President, said: “Though we must in certain matters again insist on our representation we accept and will support the Report as a whole. We recognise with admiration that it is a document which will have supreme historical importance in the history of India; that it is a document worthy of the distinguished men who have signed it. And where we cannot accept its recommendations, we rely for justification of our dissent not on mere self-interest but on the essentials of security and justice.”

Dealing with specific recommendations of the Report, Mr. Page referred to the safeguarding of the interests of British professional men and said he had nothing to say in approval of the recommendations.

As regards Law and Order, Mr. Page said that it was the greatest satisfaction to them that their arguments had been accepted and their representations had been effective. He stressed effective central control of the Intelligence and Special Branches of the Police as essential. “In my view”, he said, “the danger to the security of the State in India in future and in the near future lies more in Communism than in terrorism, more in subversive movements extending beyond the boundaries of any one province than in movements manifestations of which like those of terrorism, have hitherto appeared in the main in any province alone. I would, therefore, wish to see explicit powers placed in the hands of the Viceroy not only to control provincial policy and action but also—though this is a matter touching control of police as a whole, control to co-ordinate physical co-operation throughout British India of provincial police forces.”

Mr. Page also dealt at length with recommendations regarding High Courts, stressing the necessity for ensuring that courts in India in future be freed from the administrative control of Provincial Governments,

### Viceroy's Speech

The following is the text of His Excellency the Viceroy's speech:—

It is hardly necessary to say that it is a very real pleasure to my wife and myself to find ourselves enjoying once again the hospitality of the members of the European Association, an organisation which had been in existence for many years and whose principal duty and purpose is to guard and secure the varied interests and activities of many of my fellow-countrymen who are chiefly engaged in trade and business in all parts of India. I gratefully thank you for the warmth of your welcome to-night and particularly thank you, Sir, for the delightful and most generous terms in which you have proposed the health of my wife and myself for acceptance of this distinguished company.

Now under ordinary circumstances, on an occasion of this kind, I should not trouble you with any remark of a serious character, but the atmosphere is so charged with politics in these days and members of this Association are so keenly interested in the political situation that I venture to ask you to allow me to detain you for a few minutes in order that I may place before you my views on the report of the Joint Committee on the Indian Constitutional Reforms, which has recently been published and which is the result of the earnest deliberations of a very distinguished body of my countrymen, with wide experience of public life,



many of them with practical knowledge of administration in India, but before doing so let me express my gratitude to you, Sir, for having so very frankly put before us to-night the general views of your Association on the report. I was very glad to hear your statement that, to use your own words, the scheme embodied in the Report is satisfactory, that the recommendations of the Report form a reasonable basis on which to frame the Act which will give to India her new constitution, a constitution which will achieve a notable step towards the ultimate goal which is envisaged in the Preamble to the Act of 1919, Responsible Government of British India as an integral part of the British Empire. This, I assure you, is a most heartening and encouraging statement to the Government of India and to His Majesty's Government at Home. You were equally frank in telling us that you were still very critical of the Report on certain matters which you have referred to and that you proposed at the proper time to press your views before Parliament, which of course you are perfectly justified in doing. I am sure you would agree that this is not the time or place for me to follow you in a discussion on the points you have raised, for it might lead to, I am sure, a very friendly but at the same time a somewhat lengthy exchange of views which might have found rather tedious by this distinguished company. No, Sir, my remarks to-night will refer little to the details, for I wish to express my general views on the main proposals that the Report contains and how I consider they will affect all classes and conditions of people who live and work in this country.

"We are approaching, I hope, the end of the prolonged discussions on the future government of India and although much work still remains to be done, His Majesty's Government are determined to do all that is in their power to ensure that there will be no undue delay in passing into law the Bill which will shortly be laid before the House of Commons, while I and my Government out here in India will push on with all the measures which are necessary preliminaries to the inauguration of the new constitution. A Bill of this magnitude and importance must necessarily be subject to most careful and detailed consideration by Parliament and it is a matter of the greatest satisfaction that as the result of the recent debates in both Houses, a large majority of members accepted the advice of these British statesmen, who, after the closest consultation with representatives of public opinion in this country, have embodied their conclusions in that historical document, the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee.

#### EXTREME VIEWS

As is inevitable in all political controversies, extreme views have been expressed. On the one hand we have in India those who, paying little attention to history, appear at times to be oblivious of the fact that it is, as a result of co-operation between Britain and India, that India has arisen to the position which she now enjoys. They have advocated a severance with the past and have adopted the policy of complete independence. In pursuit of that policy they have at times followed the most unconstitutional methods, but the methods of boycott, non-co-operation and civil disobedience have now been given up, I trust finally, and I welcome the return to the Central Legislature of the representatives of the Congress Party, who have been successful at the recent election, for, closer association with the Government and with its problems and difficulties will, I hope, make them realise that all of us, whatever our political views or whatever our position, are equally eager for the advancement of this great country to its promised goal.

At the other extreme there are those who, while not advocating any repudiation of the ideal set out in 1919 of the progressive realisation of Responsible Government in British India as an integral part of the Empire, are apprehensive that progress is too rapid and that the advancement which is now proposed will not result in the good government of the country nor conduce to the strength and prosperity of the Empire. Those who hold these views seem to have their eyes too much focussed on the past and to overlook the developments of the last quarter of a century and the growth during that period of a great spirit of nationalism in India.

Between these two extreme views it is my confident belief that a large majority of public opinion, both in this country and in my own, while for different reasons they may not agree with these proposals in their entirety, are ready to support them in the belief that they are a fair, just and well-balanced effort to deal with the manifold difficulties and intricate questions that constitutional reforms in India necessarily involve.



## FEDERATION

Many of you have no doubt studied the Report with care or at least the admirable introduction to the detailed proposals which sums up the problem and gives concisely the reasons underlying the recommendations. You will have seen that the Committee have steered the middle course. They have recognised the danger both of rashness and overcaution and in the constitution which they have recommended have propounded a scheme of evolutionary constitutional development, a scheme designed both to work successfully in India as it is to-day and to contain in itself the seeds of further growth. With this object in view they have stressed the need for flexibility so that opportunity may be afforded for a natural process of evolution with a minimum of alteration of the constitutional frame work. It will, I think, be agreed that the constitutional framework is sound. From these proposals will be framed a measure which, for the first time, contains complete Autonomy in the Provinces, and a very large extension of the franchise, both male and female, to what we have hitherto, and in the Centre, too, the administration under the Governor-General will become largely autonomous which, to my mind, is one of the most important proposals of them all, for, speaking with some experience, I have long been convinced that the present system of having a non-official majority with an irremovable executive is a temptation to that majority to be apt to be irresponsible in their actions in the Legislative Assembly and is the worst possible training in Parliamentary life. Yes, and they contain for the first time the great purpose of producing an All-India Federation, the possibility of which was brought about by the fine gesture made by the representatives of the Princes at the first Round Table Conference, an ideal which many of us have had for some years in our minds and which we now trust may come to fruition.

And here, Sir, I should like to say a very few words with regard to the Princes, more particularly so, because efforts have been made on more than one occasion recently to misrepresent my attitude and to accuse me and my political officers of endeavouring to coerce, bribe and intimidate the Princes into joining the Federation. I deny that flatly and absolutely and furthermore I am certain that every Prince in India will endorse what I say. My attitude has been and will continue to be that I have advised those Princes who have sought my advice to enter into the great federal scheme provided that their legitimate aspirations are met by the provisions of the Bill, for, I honestly and sincerely believe, that their entry will be not only to their own advantage, but for the benefit of India as a whole. Advice however, is not coercion or intimidation and whereas no pressure has been brought in the past, so will no pressure be brought in the future either by myself or by the officers of my Political Department to coerce or intimidate the Princes with regard to the important decision which they must shortly take but I trust and hope that when the bill is laid on the table of the House of Commons they will find that their position will be adequately safeguarded and that they will therefore stand by the promises and assurances given by their representatives at the first Round Table Conference to be a willing partner in an All-India Federation.

## LAW AND ORDER

"There is one point of detail however to which I feel I must refer to-night. You, members of the European Association in Bengal have naturally been specially interested in the problem of law and order and in the provisions that have been made for dealing with the menace of terrorism, which unfortunately still overhangs this Presidency. I trust you are satisfied with the proposals put forward by the Committee. After a full consideration of the problem in all its aspects and of the opinion and suggestions which your representatives and others have put forward, they have introduced further safeguards and their report has been criticised on this ground, but I sincerely hope that necessity for using these safeguards will not arise. There are already most reassuring signs that public opinion in Bengal is setting against the terrorist movement and I trust that the first Ministers in this Presidency will shoulder the responsibility which is put upon them and, with the full support of the services of the Crown, will deal with this problem as efficiently as it has been dealt with by the present Government of Bengal, but should my optimism be misplaced, should conditions be such as to render the use of these safeguards inevitable, you may rest assured that they will be brought into effect and that nothing will be done which will cause conditions in Bengal to deteriorate.

The provision of safeguards has evoked more criticism than any other part of the constitutional proposals and even though the Committee have given what, to my mind, are most convincing arguments in support of these proposals, they are often misrepresented and many critics tend to overlook that important passage in the Report in which the Committee point out that these safeguards are not only not inconsistent with some form of Responsible Government, but, in the present circumstances of India, it is no paradox to say that they are the necessary complement to any form of it, without which it could have little or no hope of success, but this does not mean that they will be in constant use. As the Governor-General of Canada, many powers were entrusted to me which I never had occasion to use. If all goes well—and I am optimistic enough to hope that it will—there will be few occasions for using them in this country but still they are there in reserve and if the need to bring them into effect should unfortunately arise they will be ready to hand and will be used not merely to prevent any crisis resulting in chaos or anarchy but to prevent any deterioration of the administrative machine which would facilitate such a crisis.

#### "AN IMMENSE ADVANCE"

I have lived and worked for many years in India and can remember well the circumstances surrounding the discussions on the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms scheme which took place nearly 17 years ago and can honestly say that, to my mind, the proposals contained in the Report are an immense advance towards Responsible Government on the provisions contained in that measure. I don't think that anyone will doubt my sincerity of purpose. During all the years I have lived in this country my constant effort has always been to move India forward until she achieve her great desire to arrive at a complete position of equal partnership within the Empire with the other Dominions under the Crown, for, I have always held that the nationals of any country are fully justified in claiming that they should have the control of the administration of their own homeland as soon as they are ready to undertake the full responsibility. I would ask my Indian friends to remember a fact that we all too often forget that there have been sudden revolutionary changes in the administration in recent years in various countries, both in the East and the West, which have brought about conditions which cause grave anxiety and consequent economic depression among all countries in the world and that there is now more stability in the countries of the British Empire than can generally be found elsewhere and with the recollection of these facts, I would ask them again if it is not wiser to move steadily with our ultimate goal always in view rather than risk any disaster in our desire to move forward too fast. There are some, I know well, who are anxious to throw off at once all outside control and wish to arrive at a position of independence without any delay. With some knowledge of this country I am sure they are entirely wrong and I am perfectly confident that the great majority of all classes of our people would entirely endorse my opinion.

#### BRITISH CONNECTION WITH INDIA

Let me further say what I have always felt very strongly that during the long years of close association we, British, have shared with Indians the great trust and responsibility for the care and well-being of the various and diverse human elements in this land. We are not going to hand over that responsibility until we can safely do so, until indeed, our Indian fellow citizens are ready to take the full responsibility for the administration of their country and I ask: Is that not a reasonable view and one that is in the best interests of every citizen in this country? Is it not true to say that when first our two races became associated over 100 years ago, India was in a condition of turmoil and unrest and may I not claim that this close association has brought to India safety from foreign aggression? Has it not largely saved India from the horrors of plague and famine? Have we not secured fair administration throughout the country and the development of transport by road, rail and air which has proved an immense benefit to our people and which has opened up the possibility of establishing many great commercial and industrial concerns, which have brought increasing prosperity and employment in their train? May I not claim too that this has come about in the past years largely owing to the brains and expert knowledge of thousands of my countrymen who have for long years given devoted service to this country during the best years of their lives and if this association has been of benefit to

India, has not a further benefit been secured by the fact that she has become and is becoming an increasingly important partner in the destinies of a great Empire which is the most stable part of the civilised world at the present times ?

When a report deals with a problem of the greatest magnitude, with a problem which has been under discussion for years and on which all shades of opinion have put forward their views, it must inevitably happen that there are many points of detail on which many of us do not see eye to eye with the Committee. There is still opportunity for those who object to some of the proposals to press for modification on points of detail, but we must take the Report as a whole and the question which we in India have to decide is what attitude should be adopted by those in this country who are anxious for its political advancement.

#### TWO ALTERNATIVES

Two alternatives seem to me to present themselves. The first is to accept the Report as laying down broadly the right lines of advance, Provincial Autonomy, an All-India Federation, and a considerable measure of Responsibility at the Centre. The second alternative is a flat and sterile rejection of the scheme, an attitude which connotes continuing for an indefinite period under the existing constitution. We stand at the parting of the way. The process of legislation is about to commence. The question which India has to decide is which of these two courses is more likely to hold the cause of India's freedom in Parliament. To my mind there can be but one answer and so I urge all those who are interested in reforms to work this Bill when it passes through Parliament. We may not get all we wish for. We may not feel satisfied with all its contents but I am certain that if we work it with sincerity and purpose we shall find that it is a great advance, a big step forward towards complete responsibility for Indians in India.

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# The Landholders' Conferences

## THE AGRA ZAMINDARS' CONFERENCE

A conference of the zemindars of the province of Agra was held at Allahabad in the Marris Hall of the Agra Province Zemindars' Association, on the 5th. August 1934, to form a party of Zemindars, whose function will be to devise measures to safeguard the interests of the zemindar community in particular.

The third conference of the zemindars of the Agra province held at Aligarh recently had decided to form such a party and to draw up a scheme of the proposed party and had appointed a sub-committee, which drew up the aims and objects of the party and drafted a tentative constitution. The conference held to-day was convened to confirm the decisions of the sub-committee.

About 250 Zemindars were invited of whom over 150 were present. The invitations were not confined to the members of the Agra Province Zemindars' Association but many who were not members of the association were also invited.

### *Nawab of Chhatari's Inaugural Speech*

*Nawab Sir Muhammad Ahmad Said Khan* of Chhatari (who was the president of the third conference of the Agra Province Zemindars held recently at Aligarh and the chairman of the sub-committee of that conference appointed to draw up a scheme of the proposed party) inaugurated the conference. In the course of his inaugural speech the Nawab said that it was not intended to confine the membership of the party to the Zemindars only. As far as the question of improving the condition of the people of India was concerned the party's aim would be neither to lag behind nor go ahead of any other party. But the reason why a separate party was being formed was that the parliamentary system of government was impossible unless there were various parties in the country. In England, for instance, there were the Labour, Liberal and other parties and at the same time it could not be said of any of them that they had not the interest of legitimate possessions.

He, however, made it clear that one of the basic principles of the new party would be respect for the right of private proprietorship. The party would try to devise means to solve the economic difficulties without depriving persons of their legitimate possessions.

So far as the question of the communal problem and of finding ways to improve the condition of the masses was concerned, their party would be as keen to solve them as any other party. Except the Congress, which had in its folds members of all the communities, the proposed new party, the Nawab declared, would be the only other party, which would include members of the communities. It would not be a communal party and it would be the sincere endeavour of the party to solve the most ticklish communal question.

In conclusion, the Nawab of Chhatari warned the conference that they should not work the party in such a manner as to give an impression to the public at large that its activities retarded or hindered the progress of the country.

*Nawab Sir Muhammad Muzammilullah Khan*, who was also the president of the Agra Province Zemindars' Association, was next voted to preside over the conference.

### *NAWAB SIR MUHAMMAD YUSUF*

*Nawab Sir Muhammad Yusuf* (Minister) supporting the proposal that Nawab Sir Muhammad Muzammilullah Khan should preside said that if the zemindars wanted to lead a respectable life it was time now that they made an effort to organize themselves. He urged they should unite and support at the coming elections only those candidates who agreed with their views and they should not say that because certain candidates set up by the Congress or any other party happened to be their close friends there they would vote for them and not for their party candidates.

## Nawab of Bhikampur's Presidential Address

*Nawab Sir Muhammad Muzammilullah Khan* of Bhikampur then took the chair and in the course of a brief presidential speech appealed to the zemindars for unity. The present condition of the zemindars, he pointed out, was deplorable. If any zemindar was arrested for non-payment of revenue or was involved in a case, brother zemindars did not care in the least for him.

The president also regretted to find that nobody had at present any sympathy with the zemindars, nor even the newspapers, although zemindars belonged to a class, to whom mainly many public institutions owed their existence. He had, however, no complaint to make against anybody. The zamindars themselves were responsible for their present plight. In the past they were held in high esteem but now they had no voice even in the Councils. The president asserted that they should in future send such persons to the legislatures who would be zemindar first, anything else afterwards.

## AIMS OF NATIONAL AGRICULTURIST PARTY

*Major Ranjit Singh* next read to the conference the aims and objects of the party to be called the 'National Agriculturist party, which has been finally discussed and passed at Naini Tal on June 17 last by the Aligarh conference sub-committee. The conference accorded its approval to the aims and objects, the president adding that these would form a sort of manifesto of the zemindar party and the zemindars would go to the Councils with those objects. They are as follows :—

(a) To devise means for the peace, prosperity and good government of the country ; (b) to adopt all constitutional means in order to obtain self-government in India ; (c) to create healthy public opinion ; (d) to protect and advance by all constitutional means the interest of the people generally and of the agricultural population particularly in these provinces ; (e) to help and advance the political, social, educational and economic uplift of the province ; (f) to create better and friendly relations between the various classes and communities of the province ; (g) to encourage industries of the country generally and cottage and agricultural industries particularly ; (h) to encourage the establishment of co-operative credit societies and land mortgage banks, and to take steps to reduce the heavy burden of taxation ; (i) to help and improve medical and public health facilities generally and in the rural areas particularly ; (j) to regulate exchange policy in the interest of the country ; (k) to reduce expenditure and effect substantial economy in every branch of the Government administration.

After the conference had accepted the aims and objects laid down by the committee, *Pandit Raj Nath Kunzru*, who had also been invited to the conference, sought permission to speak on the aims and objects. The president informed him that the conference had already confirmed the aims and objects placed before it but Mr. Kunzru was allowed to speak.

Mr. Kunzru began with the remark that they were forming a zemindars' party today'.

*Nawab of Chhatari* : It is not a zemindars' party but of those who subscribe to our views.

Mr. Kunzru : A party specially of the zemindars and of those who agreed with this new political party.

President : Do not say repeatedly 'political'. It is an agriculturists' party.

Mr. Kunzru continuing said that the new political party, as the Nawab of Chhatari had indicated, would be to devise means for the betterment of economic conditions. It will also deal with some political matters as was evident from the list of aims and objects. In the past most of the zemindars did not take part in politics but submitted to what the Government desired.

President : We will now take part in politics.

Continuing the speaker said that whether the political principles of the new party were correct or not was a different matter but the formation of a party by the zemindars at the present juncture has caused an impression that it was a party of vested interests and was being formed to protect the zemindars' interests and not for the benefit of the country.

President :—We are forming the party with both the objects, to protect our interests and also for the country's benefit.

Mr. Kunzru said that if the object of the party was only to protect the zemindars' interests without regard to the interests of the people in general, the forma-



tion of such a party would bring destruction upon the zemindars. There were other political parties also and the zemindars could prove by working in conjunction with them that they wanted to improve their conditions and also of the people in general. He realised that there was in existence a political party which did not respect the right of private property. Mahatma Gandhi had issued a statement clearing the position of the Congress in that respect. To the speaker Mahatma Gandhi's statement on the subject did not appear to be satisfactory but Mr. Kunzru asserted, he did not consider any necessity of having a separate political party. The result of having a separate political party would be in the best-interests of the zemindars.

*Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan*, (deputy president of the Legislative Council) replying to Mr. Kunzru emphasized that the party which was being formed was not one of zemindars but of agriculturists who formed 90 per cent of the population of the province. Besides they had not closed the doors of the party membership to non-agriculturists for whoever agreed with the objects of this party could join it. He realized that besides the Congress, there existed other political parties but the object in forming a new and separate political party was to have a party which should be altogether free from communal warfare as it was not advisable to mix up communal matters with politics. So far as political matters were concerned there should be unity among all communities. It was true that such a party should have been formed in 1920 but if they failed to do so then, there was no reason why they should not wake up and form one now. He asserted that if the agriculturists did not go with democracy they would suffer an irreparable loss. Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan thought the new party would be the best political party as it would embrace in its folds all communities and sections, rich and poor.

*Khan Bahadur Obaidur Rehman Khan* thought that Mr. Kunzru's objection to the formation of a new political party was belated. Mr. Kunzru was present at the Aligarh Conference. He said that there had been no party which supported the interests of the zemindars and for that reason some of the zemindars had been looking to the Government for the protection of their rights. The position had undergone a change now and it was, therefore, necessary to have a separate party.

Mr. Kunzru wanted to reply to the points raised in respect of his speech but the president did not allow him to speak again.

It having been decided to form a party and the aims and objects of it having been confirmed, question arose as to what steps should be taken to carry on the work of the new party. No definite scheme appeared to have been prepared beforehand for the consideration of the conference as Nawab Sir Muhammad Yusuf and some others suggested the formation of a provisional executive board while the president remarked that the board would not be provisional. As there appeared to be some misunderstanding on the subject, the conference resolved, on the motion of the *Raja of Tirwa* to form a subjects committee of 19 members to draft proposals about the constitution of the party. The conference was adjourned at 1 p.m. for an hour to enable the subjects committee to frame proposals.

#### ELECTIONS

The Conference reassembled shortly after 2 p. m. and accepted the proposals of the subjects committee with regard to the constitution of the party with slight modifications and elected office-bearers of the central board. The following is the result of elections :—

*President*, Nawab Sir Muhammad Muzammilullah Khan ; *vice presidents*, Nawab Sir Muhammad Yusuf, Nawab of Ohhatari, Raja of Padranna, Raja of Tomkahi, Raja of Badhawar, Maharajkumar of Vizianagram, Nawab of Baghpet, Sir Jawala Prasad Srivastava, Raja of Pilibhit and Raja of Katera ; *General Secretary*, Capt. Raja Durga Narayan Singh of Tirwa ; *joint secretaries*, Rai Bahadur Rai Indra Narain and Khan Bahadur Obaidur Rehman ; *treasurer*, Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan ; *honorary assistant secretary*, Lala Harsraj Swarup, There will also be a paid assistant secretary, who will be appointed after the post is advertised.

The Conference wanted to have Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan as one of the joint secretaries but despite repeated appeals the Nawabzada declined to accept the office as he felt that he would not be able to carry on the duties of a joint secretary to his satisfaction if there were two joint secretaries. The conference desired to have Major Ranjit Singh as an honorary assistant secretary but the Major expressed his inability to accept the office.

The above will be the office-bearers of the central board of the party. The members of the central board will be the representatives of the associations to be formed in every district as branches of the National Agriculturists' party. Till the associations are formed and representatives for the central body are selected by them the central board consist of those present at the conference and those who had been invited to the conference but were unable to attend it. The present central board will be dissolved when at least 25 districts have formed associations and sent representatives. The districts have been given a year's time for that work.

There was a dispute at the subjects committee meeting on the question of the qualifications of persons entitled to join the party's associations. Eventually it was agreed to throw open the membership of the district associations to those entitled to be enrolled as voters for the Legislative Council elections. The membership fee will be Re. 5 annually. But there will be no separate fee for the membership of the central body, which would carry on its work by direct subscriptions and contributions from the district associations. There was a proposal that the fee for a tenant desiring to become a member of the association should be only 8 annas annually but the proposal was not pressed.

The conference also formed an executive committee of 72 members, two persons having been selected from each district.

## THE MADRAS LANDHOLDERS' ASSOCIATION

The following is the report of the proceedings of an ordinary general body meeting of the Madras Landholders' Association held in Madras on the 2nd. December 1934 with the *Maharaja of Venkatagiri*, President in the chair.

"The Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Indian Constitutional Reforms is now before us. You are aware that as members of the Association we are not directly concerned with the larger political issues raised by the Report, for Article 3 of the Association reads: "The Association shall avoid all political questions except, such as immediately concern Zamindari interest." But I cannot refrain from expressing my opinion, with which I hope you all concur, that the Report contemplates a large measure of advance in the establishment of self-government in our land. I may at the same time express my earnest request to the Government both in England and India that they should do all that lies in their power to make the Reforms that would emerge from the Parliament such as would satisfy the legitimate and reasonable aspirations of the country and such as would secure to India a status equal to that of the other members of the British Empire within a reasonable period.

As for those recommendations contained in the Report which immediately concern the landholders of this Province, I should give place of prominence to the recommendation relating to our special representation. In paragraph 121 of the Report, whilst recommending the retention of the representation at the present level the Committee do not accede to our request for an increased representation in the future councils which would be more than double the size of the present councils. The difficulties attendant upon the re-opening of the Communal Award could be no ground for depriving us in perpetuity of our claim if it is just and reasonable on other grounds. The Committee assigns no reasons why they regard 6 seats for the landholders out of a total of 215 as adequate representation. It is inadequate when looked at from the point of view of the stake we have in the country, our contributions to the revenue of the State and our value as a steadying element in the constitution. It is also inadequate when considered in comparison with special representation afforded to other interests from the point of view of their relative importance. It is, therefore, necessary for us to urge once again that our representation should be maintained in the same proportion to the number of elected seats as it is at present.

The next recommendation of importance is the recommendation regarding the Permanent Settlement. In para 372 of the Report the Committee recommends "the Governor should be instructed to reserve for the signification of His Majesty's pleasure any Bill passed by the legislature which would alter the character of the Permanent Settlement." It is for the first time that we find recognition at the hands of the authorities of our constantly-urged claim for recognising the sanctity of

the Permanent Settlement. We are, therefore, deeply grateful to the Committee. It is gratifying to notice that the Committee recognises that any violation of the Permanent Settlement regulations will have a revolutionary effect economically. But the recommendation falls far short of our claim. The Report does not accept the contention that the Permanent Settlement regulations cannot be altered by the Indian legislature so as to affect solemn engagements entered into under the regulations by the Government of the day with the landholders, engagements which we contend were binding on the East India Company and hence binding on the Secretary of State. The Report says : "We do not dispute the fact that the declaration as to the permanence of the settlement could not have been departed from by the British Government so long as that Government was in effective control of land revenue. But we could not regard this fact as involving the conclusion that it must be placed beyond the legal competence of an Indian ministry.....to alter the enactments.....which enactments despite the promises of permanence which they contain are legally subject (like any other Indian enactment) to repeal as alteration."

The view of the Report that the British Government could not alter the Permanent Settlement but that the local legislature which derive their power from the British Government could alter it, cannot be accepted as legally correct. It should be outside the competence of the local legislature to, in any way, alter, vary or modify the permanent settlement regulations. Besides our specific point is that the balance of the income in the hands of the landholder after paying the peishcush as per the permanent settlement engagements must under no pretext be got at by the State through any scheme of taxation.

That our fears are not merely imaginary is borne out as you are aware by a recent Privy Council decision and by the recent attempt which the Madras Government made to make the income of landholders from forests situated in estates liable to income tax. Therefore we should urge the giving of a constitutional guarantee embodying the inviolability of the Permanent Settlement and a guarantee that under no circumstances would the income from permanently settled or temporary settled estates be subjected to taxation by future legislation. Apart from urging our legal case, we have already submitted to the Committee very cogent reasons as to how such a procedure would be unjust and inequitable.

The next point to which I wish to draw your attention is the qualification for the landholders' special seats. The Franchise Committee in its recommendations leaves without fixing definitely the qualification for the land-holders' seat, merely mentioning that the details should be fixed at the time of the delimitation of the constituencies. There is a necessity now to clearly lay down firstly that the landholders' constituency should contain as electors only those that are affected by the Permanent Settlement and the Estates Land Act. Secondly, that the qualification should be maintained at the same level as it is now so that there may be real representation of the class.

You are aware that we had been agitating for the establishment of a Second Chamber in our Province. In para 117, the Committee recommend a Second Chamber for Madras, among other 5 major provinces in India. We should, therefore, welcome the recommendation. I have no doubt that a Second Chamber would facilitate and ensure the smooth working of Provincial Autonomy to be set up under the future constitution. Also it would be a source for setting up healthy conventions ; for acting as it would as a check on hasty and ill-considered legislation, the Second Chamber would reduce to a minimum the necessity for the exercise of special powers vested in H. E. the Governor. One point about the Second Chamber, I wish to stress, namely, the necessity for a high franchise based upon a high property qualification. I am glad to notice the recommendation contemplates such a franchise. We had not pleaded for special representation in the Second Chamber in the Provinces, but I observe in para 122 the Committee recommend "it is proposed to include a certain number of seats to be filled by nomination by the Governor at his discretion and accordingly available for the purpose of redressing any possible inequality or to secure some representation, to women in the Upper Houses." We can justly claim that the Governor should be instructed to include the landholders among those to be nominated by him at his discretion.

In conclusion I suggest we appoint a Committee to prepare and submit a memorandum, after going in detail into the various questions affecting the landholders' interests raised by the Report.

It is to be earnestly hoped that the authorities would give their careful and sympathetic consideration to our just and legitimate demands.

### Resolutions

The following resolutions were then unanimously passed :—

"This meeting resolves that a committee consisting of the members named below be constituted to prepare and submit a memorandum to the authorities concerned on the subjects of the Special Representation of landholders, the Permanent Settlement and the Second Chambers in the Provinces on the lines indicated in the President's speech. Lt-Col. the Maharaja of Khallikote and Atagad, M. L. C., Raja Sir Vasudeva Raja of Kollengode and the Kumara Raja of Venkatagiri and the Honorary Secretary".

The meeting also adopted a resolution congratulating Raja Sir Vasudeva Raja of Kollengode on his election to the Legislative Assembly by the landholders of Madras Presidency. After transacting some of other business, the meeting came to a close with a vote of thanks to the chair.

## The All Bengal Landholders' Conference

The second session of the All-Bengal Landholders' Conference was held on the 23rd. December 1934, in the hall of British Indian Association, Calcutta under the presidency of Maharajadhiraj Bahadur of Darbhanga when amongst others Sir B. L. Mitter, Sir B. P. Singh Roy, Kumar Devendra Lal Khan, Kumar Gangananda Sinha of Srinagar, Maharaj Kumar Uday Chand Mahatab of Burdwan, Maharaja of Cossimbazar, Raja Bahadur of Nashipur, Kumar H. K. Mitter and Mr. T. P. Ghosh.

### DARBHANGA MAHARAJA'S SPEECH

*Maharajadhiraj Bahadur of Darbhanga* said that in regard to the Joint Parliamentary Committee report they should either allow themselves to be swept away by the political tornado that was raging round them or helplessly take shelter under the protecting wings of the Governors or Governor-General who were going to get special responsibility and adequate powers to safeguard the legitimate interest of the minorities.

It was quite natural for them to apprehend that the Congress party dominated in the future legislatures of the country. Legislations were bound to be introduced which would directly or indirectly make serious inroads on the rights and privileges that the zemindars enjoyed under the Permanent Settlement.

He did not really know how far the safeguards recommended by the Committee would be effected for their purposes and how many occasions they would have of coming into conflict with a hostile majority in the legislature for the preservation of their interest.

### RESOLUTIONS—BLEMISHES IN THE CONSTITUTION

*Raja Bahadur of Nashipur* moved and *Rai Bahadur K. C. Banerjee* and Mr. Satish Roy Chowdhury seconded and supported the first resolution which ran as follows :—

"That this Conference of the landholders of Bengal considers the scheme as outlined in the Report of the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reforms as an advance towards responsible Government but nevertheless recognises that the constitutional frame-work suffers from inherent weaknesses and vital imperfections. The uncertainty of the Federation with which the idea of responsibility at the Centre is bound up, the absence of provision for automatic extension of responsible Government on the ideals of Dominions, the superior authority of the security services, the limited form of transfer of Law and Order in the provinces are some of the blemishes on the Constitution, which need be removed for making the reforms acceptable to the Indian people.



"The Conference, while warmly appreciating that the sanctity of Regulation I of 1793 has been duly acknowledged in the Report, respectfully urges on the Government that the Constitution Act should provide in unequivocal language that it would not be within the competence of the Indian Legislature to alter or repeal or indirectly affect the said enactment.

"This Conference is disappointed at the suggested imposition of tax on agricultural income and of death duty which would assuredly run counter to the safeguard provided in the matter of the Permanent Settlement besides prejudicially affecting the interests of the agriculturists. The Conference also feels disappointed at the inadequacy of representation granted to the landholders in the legislatures, central and provincial, a matter which the landholders pressed upon the Government with all the emphasis that they command.

"This Conference gravely apprehends that the chance of smooth working of the Constitution in Bengal may be wrecked on the rocks of the Communal Award and the Poona Pact which enunciate undemocratic principles and go against all canons of justice and fair play and respectfully urges upon His Majesty's Government for amending "the Award" on the lines suggested by the Rt. Hon'ble the Marquess of Zetland in the Joint Committee."

Mr. T. C. Goswami moved an amendment to the effect that the scheme as outlined in the report was considered unsatisfactory and inadequate and that the proposed constitutional framework owing to the inherent weakness and vital imperfections was likely to break down. The amendment sought to delete the sentence in the resolution expressing disappointment and drawing the pointed attention of the Government to the inadequacy of representation granted to the landlords in the central and provincial legislatures.

Speaking on his amendment Mr. Goswami said that the report was an advance towards responsible government. While a conservative body like the All-Bengal Landholders' Conference might not be downright in their expression, at the same time an expression like the one in the resolution would most prejudicially affect the activities of the political parties, not merely the Congress, for he thought that an expression from a Conference like that would be quoted in England when it would suit their purpose to do so. So that it was wise and practical not to commit themselves with a definiteness of expression that the proposed scheme was an advance towards responsible Government. Personally he believed that it was deliberately retrograde. It was evident from the speeches of speakers at the conference including that of Maharajadhiraj Bahadur of Darbhanga and Mr. Tagore that the scheme was unsatisfactory. If they thought it to be so why they should not say so. In the proposed scheme they would be given responsibility without powers. They would be responsible for everything wrong but would not be in power. The amendment which Mr. Goswami had drafted did not preclude them from working the reforms or working under it. One thing he was certain that this scheme should not be allowed to go in the constitution without protest from every quarter.

Referring to more representation of landholders Mr. Goswami said that it did not look very well to demand special representation when the zemindars claimed to be the natural leaders of the people. So long as there were special constituencies there ought to be special representation for zemindars but asking for more seats through special representations was something unreasonable and untenable. He had incorporated in his amendment against any attack on agricultural income and death tax but if they wanted to go further and say that Indian legislatures should never at any future time in any form or shape or manner touch the Permanent Settlement, in that case Mr. Goswami thought they would be demanding too much. Therefore for the sake of experience he urged the conference to accept his amendment.

The amendment was put to vote and lost by two votes, 15 voting for and 17 voting against. The original resolution was then adopted by the conference.

#### MARKETING OF PRODUCE

The second resolution which was moved by the Maharaja of Cossimbazar and adopted dealt with the marketing facilities for jute, rice, coal and other facilities and settlement cost.

#### RELIEF OF LAND LORDS' INDEBTEDNESS

Mr. S. N. Tagore moved a resolution urging the Government for the establishment of a Debt Conciliation Board and of a Land Mortgage Bank to restore the



credit and relieve the indebtedness of the landlords. The resolution was adopted by the conference.

#### SUNDARBANS LAND REVENUE

*Kumar H. K. Mitter* moved a resolution urging the Government the desirability of early revision of the present system of land revenue in the Sundarbans area and re-introduction of the former basis of assignment of district acreage rate and further that the continued economic depression in the country called for a remission of land revenue in the temporarily settled estates in general and Sundarbans in particular.

He said that the country's political clamour was due to economic helplessness and whatever freedom they like to achieve in the field of politics was to enable them to secure better living conditions for the country. He complained against the present top-heavy administration which had not brought the least improvement in the economic life of the village in Bengal or any reduction in the burden of taxation. Regarding the forthcoming reforms, he urged its examination principally through the results that it would shower on the economic life of the country.

He suggested the formation of a Parliamentary Board to select candidates from the landholding community which, if established, would save many of them from a lot of trouble and prevent the growth of mutual distrust and jealousy and help them to bring about greater solidarity among the landholders.

He demolished the allegation that landholders were sleeping in luxury while peasants were dying. They had not merely to look for their bread and butter and maintain their prosperity but also look to the good of the tenants in whose prosperity their prosperity lay. He requested the critics to just have a look at the merchant prince's way of life and judge for themselves if there was the least justification for levelling any such charge. Under the present circumstances, said he, it had become extremely difficult for many Hindu landlords and tenants to get justice and fair play even at the hands of those who were expected impartially to maintain law and order and enforce justice and for this state of affairs he severely deprecated the propagation of communalism.

The speaker in particular condemned the present revenue policy of the Government in Sundarbans area which could have no other effect than to reduce the value of the property and to throw it into waste once more.

*Sir B. L. Mitter* as a candid friend of the zemindars said that there were many problems facing the community. Many of them were not difficult but as member in charge of revenue he did not get the slightest assistance for their solution from the British Indian Association.

They thought that because the J. P. C. had recognised their rights and special powers had been given to the governors they were safe. But Sir Brajendra warned them they were not so secured. Times had changed, condition of land had also changed and with the changing of times the zemindars must change themselves. The best safeguard for them was the public opinion if they could marshal it in their favour, if they could prove that their interests and that of their tenants were identical, if they again could recover the position which their predecessors had as natural leaders of the people that safeguard would again return to them and he urged the zemindars to work in that direction.

With a vote of thanks to the chair the conference dissolved.

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# The All India Medical Conference

Opening Day—New Delhi—26th. December 1934

The eleventh session of the All India Medical Conference was held in the Hindu College, New Delhi, on the 26th. December 1934 under the presidency of *Col. Bhola Nath*, I.M.S., C.I.E.

In a short speech *Dr. Ansari*, chairman of the reception committee, welcomed the president and the delegates from all parts of the country. In the course of his presidential address *Col. Bhola Nath* said :—

I had said in 1929, and I repeat it to-day in 1934, that the medical organisation of the Indian army is out of date, inefficient and unsuitable for Indian requirements, both in peace and war. For the benefit of the uninitiated it may be explained that the military sick in peace time are treated in what are called station hospitals. The hospitals are classed first, second and third class, according to the strength of the garrison at a cantonment on which the sick accommodation is based. The station hospital system was only lately introduced in the Indian army, in imitation of the system which prevails in the British Army in England and India. The system may be suited to troops in England where the climatic conditions are uniform and the country is not subject to the periodic visitations of malarial and other epidemics. In such ideal conditions the sick rate is constant and can be anticipated and provided for with precision. In India the conditions are different. With the change of seasons and periodic visitations of epidemic disease the sick-rate varies and the hospitals are full at one time and empty at other times of the year. But the station hospital system being rigid and inelastic, the sick accommodation can neither be increased nor decreased. This results in a good proportion of the hospital equipment and personnel lying idle for a good part of the year.

The field medical organisation of the army is no better. During peace time the field medical units are moribund. The equipment is carefully folded up and stored away in stations so far apart as Secunderabad and the Alipore. The personnel is distributed for duty in stations as far apart as Bombay and Mandalay and as a matter of fact, field units have no personnel in peace time. It is created by collecting and detailing men from all over India. On mobilisation being ordered, the equipment and personnel are collected and put together, before the unit can take the field. This takes time and means delay and expense.

This, I submit, is unpreparedness with a vengeance. All our past failures have been due to unpreparedness. These are serious defects in the medical organisation of the Indian army which I respectfully bring to the notice of H. E. the Commander-in-Chief. To rectify these defects I suggest that the station hospital system should be abolished and replaced by the field service system. Base hospitals, stationary hospitals and field ambulances complete with personnel, equipment forms and procedure should take the place of the present station hospitals and work in peace time as they do in the field.

## CIVIL MEDICAL ADMINISTRATION

I turn now to the civil side of the medical administration in India. After hearing the defects on the military side, the thought will naturally occur to you that if a military service has not proved a conspicuous success in the army organization, it cannot be expected to do any better in civil matters for which it was never intended. In the civil you have grievances of research work, medical relief, neglect and discouragement of the independent practitioner, the defective nature of the Medical Council, reciprocity and so on.

The one defect which stands out most conspicuously in the civil organization and which is the root cause of your troubles is the fundamental defect in the very structure of the civil machine. This defect is the combination of the civil and military functions of the service. I would remind you that the Government of India, like other Governments in the world, is a conservative Government; it hates a change of any kind; the Government firmly believes that what is being done is

the best that can be done ; it is reluctant to move forward unless it is pushed by the sheer weight of a persistent and accumulated public opinion. The Government machinery is old and antiquated and at best of times it can move slowly on its rusty hinges. It is an alien Government, and therefore it is naturally distrustful of everything and everybody ; it is a bureaucratic Government and therefore irresponsible to popular demand.

Administrator after administrator, both civil and military, brought the defect to the notice of the Government and submitted proposals for its removal to relieve the civil department from the incubus of military encroachment. The Government of India, it may be said to their credit, and the Secretary of State for India and even the British Medical Association approved these proposals and gave their blessings. Committee after committee and commission after commission were appointed to give practical effect to these proposals. But every attempt was frustrated. The long drawn and sad story of these efforts and defeats is told in my address of 1929 in which I have given chapter and verse of these proposals and the Government despatches. These need not be repeated here. Suffice it to say that the forces of re-action triumphed, defection overtook the ranks of reformers, the British Medical Association turned tail and surrendered to reactionary forces.

The reactionary knows that of all the pig heads in the world the military is the most asinine ; that his calverum is unduly thick and once an idea gets inside it, it is very difficult to get it out. He exploits the military by putting an idea into his head that the I. M. S. reserve is a military necessity. That is enough, after which it is of no use to tell the military that no army in the world keeps medical reserves like the Indian army, that nowhere in the world are the civil and military functions of a medical service so combined ; that his military reserves have proved a myth and a failure on more than one occasion, that reserves might have been necessary in ancient times when India had no medical practitioners ; and that India to-day could supply not two hundred but ten thousand medical reserves, but it was of no avail, and the military reserves remained and are still there,

The reformer inside the Government of India or the reformer outside has not been idle and has not lost hope. He has mobilized new forces and planned new attacks on the stronghold from another direction. The forces of reform are marching with a sure and steady step. Some of the outworks have already been carried and the assault on the main position is being delivered. It is a question of time as to how long the reactionary forces will last out before they finally lay down their arms.

#### MEDICAL REFORMS

I will describe to you now, that in face of these difficulties, what the reformer has been able to achieve, what has been done and what remains to be done and the steps which must be taken to gain the final victory.

The first step on the road to reform was taken when health and education were made a transferred subject. This was a most important step. It tacitly admitted that the care of health and education was the people's own concern. If they prove themselves fit in this, they will be considered fit for other and most important things. This is an experiment and we are on our trial.

The second step in the same direction is the provincialisation of the transferred subject. This step further assumes that health conditions are difficult in different parts of India. By provincialising the transferred subjects, each province is left free to work out its own salvation in the best way it can without dictation or direction from outside.

Constitutionally speaking, India is in a state of transition. Everything is in a state of flux. The structure is in the making. Its cement is wet and not yet properly set, and one cannot say what shape the building will ultimately take.

The minister of to-day is not the minister of to-morrow. To-day the minister is a raw material in an embryonic state whose spine has not yet ossified. He is undergoing training in the A. B. C. of his port-folio-discipline, a sense of duty and responsibility. To-day he is counting the coins in his pocket before thinking of schemes of his office. He is not the leader but is led by the heads of his department.

The minister of to-morrow will be a different man ; he will be a man of grit, he will have the power behind him and will know how to use it, he will be the master and not the slave of his department. He will know and will insist upon how best to use and where to use the personnel of his department. In the course of evolution

he will ultimately develop into a genuine ministry of health with a professional man at its head.

#### INDIAN MEDICAL COUNCIL

The third forward step on the road to reform is the Indian Medical Council. It had been considered desirable to have a council of our own. In order to deal with the question of the Indian medical council I desire to place before you both sides of the question, the Government side as well as the popular side. I present the Government point of view first.

In this connection it is also necessary to emphasize the fact which is often lost sight of, that the Government rightly claims responsibility for medical education in India. It grants the hall-mark of medical degrees. It has, therefore, a right to lay down the standard which it considers necessary and the conditions of attaining that standard.

We further forget the undoubted fact that the Government of India are not a free agent in these matters. There is the Secretary of State for India who claims a similar responsibility over and above the Indian Government. He has his own advisors in the British General Medical Council and the die-hards at the India Office. He must consult them and cannot ignore their advice. Your voice might reach the heights of Simla and the walls of its Secretariat, but it will not penetrate the thick walls and thicker heads at Whitehall. These are hard facts and practical difficulties to which no honest critic of the Government can shut his eyes.

Gentlemen, this is the Government side of the picture which I have so far placed before you. I have tried to place the Government side of the case as fairly as possible. Now I would like to present the other side of the case which puts a different complexion on the Government version. It is often said that the Government of India cannot do a thing with good grace. I am afraid there is a good deal of justification for this view of the Government of India as illustrated by the Indian Medical Council, the story of which I am going to narrate.

It had been noticed for a long time that the British General Medical Council had been trying to perpetuate their hold on the medical education of India by imposing their own standard of education and examinations in disregard of the fact that the conditions of medical practice in this country are quite different to those which prevail in England. This was highly resented by the medical profession in India. The Indian indignation culminated in the attempt of the council to foist the appointment of a medical inspector in India at the expense of the Indian taxpayer. This raised such a storm of protest that the council nominee had to beat a hasty retreat.

The next move on the part of the Council was the suggestion that India should have a medical council of its own. This move was to lull the public into the belief that having a council of their own the educational bodies could solve their educational problems in their own way without interference or dictation from outside. But the hidden motive in this sinister move was that if a subservient council could be set up, it would serve the purpose better than the appointment of an inspector of education. Agreeably to this scheme an Indian Medical Council Bill was passed.

At the very start the composition of the council did not inspire much confidence. Out of the 30 members no less than 22 were officials and nominated by the Government. It was therefore feared that with only eight elected members no popular measure of reform had a chance of getting through the council. But with all that it was hoped against hope that members, whether nominated or official, were after all honourable and conscientious men, who would not sacrifice the interest of the profession for a seat on the council. The same hope was entertained about the representatives of universities who were also officials.

It was further hoped that the hon. Member in charge of Education and Health being an Indian and patriot, was not likely to play into the hands of the British General Council. The council was inaugurated by the hon. member with a great flourish of high sounding phrases that he was going to secure efficiency at home and honour abroad. But the cloven hoof of the British Medical Council was visible at the very first meeting of the council in the appointment of its secretary who was a nominee of the British Medical Council. The first meeting of the council was held in March 1934. Members from inside could see how the game was being played better than people from outside the council. In this meeting a resolution



was tabled to the effect that the secretary of the council should not be an inspector of education. The resolution was passed by a large majority of 15 to 9 which included officials and nominated members some of whom made strong speeches in support of the resolution. This move on the part of the non-official members took the wind out of the sails of the British Medical Council. But they had counted without their host, the hon. member in charge.

There were two difficulties in his way. First, there were the official and non-official members who had voted for the resolution. Secondly, there was the regulation of the Council Act which required that a motion as a motion or amendment which has been moved or withdrawn with the leave of the council, shall not be admissible, if it raises substantially the same question, within one year of the date of the meeting at which it was designed or moved.

But the hon. member is a past master of the art of political game. He got over both these difficulties in his own clever way. A meeting was called in which tails were severely twisted and the Major-Generals and Rai Bahadurs were politely told that honour and conscience may be one thing, but voting is something quite different. They were taught the elementary lessons in voting and the art of swallowing one's own words. The second difficulty was got over by simply brushing aside the regulation.

A meeting of the council was called in June 1934 in which the secretary of the council was appointed Inspector of Medical Education in India, and thereby the council reversed its own decision of March 1934. At the same meeting a resolution was proposed that the council should appoint two sub-committees for considering the question of medical curriculum and a uniform standard of examinations. The idea underlying the resolution was that the sub-committee would draw up a course of instruction which would satisfy the particular needs of Indian medical and health requirements.

This however would not satisfy the authorities of the I. M. S. who are bent upon converting the Indian Council into a branch of the G. M. C. The resolution was turned down and in its place an amendment was passed giving powers to the executive committee to form such sub-committees. Whether the sub-committee were formed or not, two printed draft-recommendations of the medical Council of India in regard to professional education for graduates and professional examinations, (adopted by the executive committee June 1934) were sent out to all universities in India. These drafts are a verbatim copy of the recommendations of G. M. C. The G. M. C. wanted to have an inspector of education of their own standard of studies and examinations. They have got both, thanks to the new Indian Medical Council. Such are the achievements of the first council and such is the parody of a council which the hon. members has been able to give to India. After all that haggling and negotiations this is the net result.

The question naturally arises whether the hon. member has been hood-winked or has he deliberately bartered away the honour abroad which he was so very jealous to guard. Gentlemen, politics is a dirty game!

#### A MACHIAVELLIAN DESIGN

The fourth step on the road to reform was taken in the year 1923 when the Secretary of State in Council under Rule 12 of the Devolution Rules checked the further encroachment in the civil department by the military officers by fixing their number to 268 appointments.

The fifth step in the same direction was taken by the Government of India in their communique of 1918. This would have been a large step and a very important step if the communique had been a genuine and an honest document and had given the substance of what it promised to give in form. Gentlemen, the communique is an important document and it deserves a careful examination.

The communique is deceptively worded. Its secret purpose is artfully concealed beneath profuse official verbiage. At a superficial glance it looks harmless, nay fair, and even generous. It is only a very careful study and analysis of its contents which reveal the underlying Machiavellian design and its profound iniquity. It is a long document. I will only give you an outline.

Para. 2 lays down that the I. M. S. constituted on the same broad lines as at present will be retained primarily to meet the needs of the Indian Army. Please note carefully that the primary purpose of the I. M. S. is the military duty.

Para 3 reads that, on as precise a basis as possible, the number of war reserve officers is 200, of which 134 will be British and 66 Indian officers.



Para 4 is headed Civil Requirements. This would lead one to infer that officers under this head have nothing to do with the military department. It further gives details of civil requirements, dividing the officers in two categories.

(a) Officers required for medical attendance on superior services and their families.

(b) Officers required for civil administration.

Then, as if to confound the issue, it introduces another category, which it calls residuary officers, 'the incumbents of which will be permanently retained in civil employment whether for purpose of treatment or of administration and who cannot therefore be treated as part of war reserve.'

In para 5 we find that the total number of I. M. S. officers, in all, required for civil employment, is calculated at 302, and therefore deducting 200 war reserve mentioned in para 3 we obtain the figure of 102 which represents the number of residuary officers who are not a part of war reserve and therefore whose employment in the civil is purely a civil question and not a military necessity.

Before proceeding with the examination of the rest of the communique I wish to draw your attention to a few points which arise out of what has been noted so far, not with a view to expose the iniquity contained therein, so much as to indicate the line which your demands should take and the direction which the reforms in future will and must take. The points are these—

1. As a matter of military necessity the military ask the civil department to oblige them by finding temporary civil employment for their war reserves till such time that they may be required for military duty.

2. Finding the civil department obliging they push another 102 I. M. S. officers who are not part of war reserve.

3. The excuse, in this case, is not a military necessity, but civil requirement. The provision of civil requirement surely is a civil necessity which concerns the civil department only.

As the medical department is a transferred subject, these requirements should be met provincially from the provincial cadre. The civil department could recruit European medical men in the provincial cadre for the purpose of attendance on superior personnel.

4. The designers of the communique usurp the function of these provincial medical department, and rob the provincial service of 102 posts, which are theirs by right.

5. They not only rob but dictate the posts which the robbers should occupy, in fact, all the posts which carry power and emoluments are usurped without regard to the most important question whether these officers are fit for these posts or not.

The remaining portion of the communique need not detain us long. To provide employment for 302 officers 237 posts are required; the remaining 65 officers will constitute the leave and study leave reserve calculated at the rate of 27 and a half percent. But the communique is silent as to where these officers will be kept.

Of the 237 posts 59 will be available under the Government of India and 178 will be provided in the provinces, thereby releasing 90 posts out of 268 under Rules 12 of the Devolution Rules of 1923.

The release of 90 posts would have been a boon and a step in the right direction if it had not been nullified by a condition which makes the gift a mockery and a hollow sham.

The communique provides firstly that the present incumbents of these posts will remain undisturbed until such time that they are gathered to their fathers. It further provides that the next generation of I. M. S. who joined the civil department on the day of the promulgation of the communique will have prospective right to these posts preserved for them till their generations too die out of natural death. The naivety of this scheme is equalled only by its diabolical ingenuity. The rest of the communique is plain sailing.

#### RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Having cheated the provincial services, it proceeds to cheat still more systematically men of the same service, the Indian I. M. S. men. It introduces communal and racial discrimination in an imperial service and destroys that harmony which is so very necessary for the smooth working of the service. Suffice it to say that the spoils of the civil department have been unfairly and unequally divided between the Indian and British officers much to the disgust and discontent of the former,

I will not go into the details of the distribution of civil posts. I have dealt with this subject before and can refer the curious to my address referred to before.

It may be noted as a minor detail that the residuary posts are so cunningly arranged that not one of them is reserved for the Indian I. M. S. men. It will so happen that when mobilisation is ordered on a large scale that all the Indian portion of the army reserve will be sent to field service while the British officers will remain enjoying the comforts of residuary posts.

It only remains to say in this connection that many official and semi-official explanations have been forthcoming from time to time of this invidious distinctions between men of the same service. I would mention only two of them.

A high official, who holds a much higher position now than before, told my informant that a large number of civil posts has been reserved for Europeans in the interest of the Indian I. M. S. officers of the future. We are keeping these posts snug and warm for them. If then the Europeans give up these posts they will be snapped up at once by the provincial men. The explanation explains nothing but it make one thing clear that this gentleman's intelligence is no better than his honesty.

The other explanation I had in and I have it in writing from the late and lamented Sir Rice Edward who was a sincere friend of the Indian and an honest man. He told me that it was really a question of the top dog and the underdog. If you top-dog and they would do the same. That gentleman gave a true and honest explanation.

Our critical survey of the communique has brought out the three future stages of medical reform which you have to fight and struggle for.

First, you have to demand rendition of the 102 so called residual posts of the communique.

Secondly, you should demand that the release of 90 posts should be made a reality and not a sham.

Thirdly, that the transfer of the medical department should be made a living fact and not a farcical comedy.

When you have struggled through these stages your goal will be in sight. There will be only 200 military officers left in the civil department. With the effective transfer of the medical department they are bound to be absorbed in the provincial cadre.

When that much desired and happy event comes to take place, it will be time for the D. G., I. M. S. to receive his *conge* from the Government of India and bid good-bye to the fair heights of Simla.

The present D. D., I. M. S. is a personal friend of mine and I only hope this change will not come in his time and if it does come, I hope it will be nothing worse than to change his tunic and plumes of I.M.S. into the top hat and frock coat of a ministry of health. Gentlemen, that is your goal.

#### THE INDEPENDENT MEDICAL PROFESSION

I have devoted a large portion of my address in dealing with the official side of the medical profession.

In this please do not for a moment imagine that I have neglected the independent profession. I have done this for two reasons. In the first place I do not make any distinction between the official and non-official medical profession and, secondly, because I firmly believe that the medical officialdom rather than the so-called official medical profession is the chief and only barrier which stand in the way of the independent medical profession. Unless that barrier is removed and the path is made clear, you as independent profession cannot make a headway. In my address I have tried to show how the path can be cleared.

In the long and weary struggle which I have outlined so far, you as private practitioners have a part to play and a very important part.

In the journey which we have undertaken together, I have assumed the arrival of a stage when some at least of the barriers are removed and the medical department is in fact and completely provincialised.

You have, therefore, to work provincially. Your work lies in the provices. The most important requisite for provincial work is the formation of strong powerful provincial branches of the Indian Medical Association. With live and active branches, in all districts and even villages in all provinces, organize and consolidate medical opinion in your province. Don't permit cleavage in your ranks into the

official and non-official medical profession. I am aware that the service man fights shy of the Indian Medical Association. He would rather stand aside and let somebody else do the dirty work for him and he to enjoy the fruit of your labours.

But in this, gentlemen, he is not a coward : he is not his own master, he is cowed down by the tyranny of the *Czars* at Simla.

The tyranny of the *Czar* is coming to an end at Simla as it has disappeared elsewhere. The time is not far off, when Sir Rice Edwards' under-dog will be coming to his own, and it will not be long when they will lick the hands of the under-dog.

The other man whom the *Czars* are trying to divide from you is the licentiate. Don't desert the poor man ; he has done the pioneer work of the profession. There are over 25,000 of them all over India who are doing most useful work in urban and rural towns. The uniformity of education and qualification is only a device to create division in your ranks. The licentiate is a part of you.

Having secured the solidarity of your profession you set to work. The ministers are your own men, the provincial legislature is your own ; secure their good-will and support. Then you have the public opinion and public press, secure their cooperation and support also. Having made sure of your allies and support convince them that in matters of medical relief and sanitary reform the cooperation and help of the independent practitioner is most essential in order to popularize and extend the state measures of medical relief, especially in times of great national disasters such as floods, earthquakes, famine, epidemics and great wars.

To be able to render assistance to the Government of your province I should advise you to organize medical relief measures, and enlist your-selves freely for army reserve forces.

Your offer of honorary services as surgeons and physicians in provincial hospitals and dispensaries will be most welcome. You will be most useful as registrars of birth, vaccinators and health officers in rural areas. The municipal bodies and district boards who generally live from hand to mouth will be only too glad of your voluntary services.

Your willing cooperation will help to enlarge the scope of medical relief and result in economy.

There is enormous scope for work in maternity, child-welfare, nursing, first aid, health inspection of school children, sanitation and so on.

To enable you to render professional services efficiently to your country and the state, you demand the recognition of your status. If the registration of qualification imposes certain obligations on the recipient it confers on him certain privileges also. These privileges are your due as registered private practitioners, such as the granting of certificates for recruiting and invaliding of civil servants, and of examining medicolegal cases.

You should further demand that the undue and unfair competition which is going on at present between the struggling private practitioner and the salaried state medical man should cease by confining the latter to his consulting practice only.

This, gentlemen, is the writing on the wall and this is my vision of the future progress of the medical profession in India.

#### RESOLUTIONS—Second Day—New Delhi—27th. December 1934

Important resolutions were passed unanimously at the conference to day :—

(1) This conference places on record its deep sense of loss at the untimely demise of Drs. M. L. Mitra, P. Nandi, Ranganathan. B. C. Chatterjee, P. C. Bhattacharya, Man Singh, Mohd. Shafi, Bhaje Khar and conveys its heartfelt sympathy and condolence to the bereaved family.

(2) This conference condemns the Indian Medical Council Act, 1930 and calls upon the members of the Indian Legislative Assembly to take early steps to so amend it as to provide therein among other things more suitable arrangement for reciprocity in large numbers of elected members and the inclusion of licentiates within its purview.

(3) This conference strongly resents the appointment of a non-Indian as the secretary of the Medical Council of India.

(4) This conference disapproves the appointment of the secretary, Medical Council of India as inspector of examinations and course of instructions and it condemns the action of members of the council, particularly the elected members

which ultimately made such appointment possible in June 1934 thereby reversing the decision of the council in this connection arrived at at its meeting held in March 1934.

(5) This conference is of opinion that the recommendations of the Drug Inquiry Committee be given effect to and a bill for that purpose be placed before the legislature at an early date.

(6) This conference recommends to the Government of India the inclusion in pharmacopoeia in use in state hospitals and dispensaries of such drugs of indigenous origin whose value has been scientifically established in the treatment of disease prevalent in India.

(7) This conference strongly recommends to the Government of India, provincial Governments and local authorities not to curtail the financial grants necessary for the scientific medical research and for medical relief in the country.

(8) This conference strongly urges the necessity of amending the provincial Medical Council Act so as to ensure a majority of the elected members in their constitutions and invite the Indian Medical Association to take the necessary action in this respect through its provincial branches.

(9) This conference is of opinion that the demands by the various Government or bodies under state control for counter signature on certificates issued by registered medical practitioners is uncalled for and inequitable and urges its abolition immediately.

#### RESOLUTIONS—Third Day—New Delhi—28th. December 1934

Discussion centred round the recommendations of the J. P. C. regarding the Medical Services at the Conference, which came to a conclusion to-day.

The Conference after careful perusal of the J. P. C. Report opined that the continued appointment of members of the Indian Medical Service to the Civil side as contemplated by para 299 of the Report (Part 1, Volume 1) was entirely unjustified and uncalled for.

The Conference concurred with the view expressed in Para 299 of the Report of the Service Sub-Committee of the first Round Table Conference that there should be no civil branch of the Indian Medical Service and that the Civil Medical Service of the Government of India should be recruited through the Public Services Commission. The Conference opined that the present method of recruiting officers of the Indian Medical Services by selection was undesirable and unsatisfactory and reiterated the resolutions passed by the previous meetings of the Conference that the system should stop and that an open competitive examination for recruitment should be held in India. The Conference wanted that all officers of the I. M. S., employed in the Civil Medical Department must be wholly under the control of the Minister in charge of the portfolio.

The Conference opined that the right of appeal sought to be given by the Report to the Privy Council (para 364, page 215, Volume one, part one) from considered decisions of the Indian Medical Council, as approved by the Governor-General in Council, was a direct infraction of the provisions of the Indian Medical Council Act of 1933 and as such right conflicted with the anatomy professedly enjoyed by the Indian Medical Council, the Conference strongly condemned this recommendation of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, as it deprived the Council of the right of reciprocity with other countries, as to mutual recognition of respective medical degrees and diplomas conferred by the said Act.

The Conference dissented strongly from the proposal in para 365 Volume 1 part 1 entitling the members of the Indian Medical Service, the Royal Army Medical Corps and the Royal Air Force Medical Service to practise in India, merely by virtue of the Commission they held, thus infringing upon the rights of reciprocity granted to the Council as per sections 13, 14 and 17 of the Indian Medical Council Act of 1933.

Another resolution urged deductions from incometax assessments of medical men in respect of necessary requisites, such as conveyance, medical books, surgical instruments etc.

The Conference endorsed the U. P. Medical Conference resolution which held as derogatory to the interests of the medical profession the recent amendment to the U. P. Poisons Act.



# The All India Library Conference

Opening Day—Madras—24th. December 1934

The eighth All-India Public Library Conference commenced its session, on the 24th. December 1934 at the Congress House, Royapettah, Madras under the presidency of *Kumar Munindra Deb Rai Mahasai*, President, Bengal Library Association. A large gathering was present.

## Welcome Address

Mr. *K. L. Narasimha Rao*, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in welcoming the President and the delegates said that Madras was the place where the first All-India Library Conference was held and where the constitution of the All-India Library Association was framed. Again in 1927 the All-India Library Conference met here for the second time and the second Conference was responsible for the organisation of the Madras Library Association. The All-India Library Association was the first in the field of Library organisation in British India and it had a long history of 15 years' service to its credit. Of late attempts were being made, and continued, to organise an All-India Library Association, by several persons and such had recently been started at Calcutta. In this connection he would appeal to all those interested in Library work to co-operate in strengthening the All-India institution by joining it, instead of dissipating their energies in starting new associations.

Though the Modern Library Movement was of recent origin, the Library system itself was not new to India. In ancient India libraries existed in all important centres of education like Taxila, Ujjain, etc. In medieval and modern times also, libraries were founded by enlightened kings. Libraries for some time past could develop owing to political circumstances. But now there were signs to show that people were taking interest in the promotion and development of libraries, and the speaker had no doubt that in the near future they would be able to develop on a large scale of libraries which compare very favourably with those in the advanced Western countries. For this a huge effort on the part of the people and the Government was necessary. The real problem of to-day was that people should be taught to look upon education solely, as a means of culture and not as a means of livelihood and for this, the library was the most suitable agency for developing the cultural side of the people. Education was becoming more and more costly, while the return was very little.

Proceeding he said India was shortly going to have a constitution based on Democracy and no Democracy would be safe unless the people were educated and cultured. So, the need of educating illiterate masses of India, who formed 90 per cent of the population was very great. Unless the Government which was willing to transfer the power to the people took more interest in promoting the Library movement through financial help, it might not be possible to develop libraries on a very extensive scale in an organised and systematic manner. The Madras Library Association was responsible for the introduction of a Libraries Bill in the Local Legislative Council for the organisation and development of libraries in this province. It was the desire of every body that there should also be legislation for the promotion and growth of libraries and the speaker appealed to the local Government to see that the Bill was passed into an Act at an early date, and thus show the way to the other provincial Governments.

Mr. *Narasimha Rao* then requested Mr. *K. M. Asadullah*, Librarian, Imperial Library, Calcutta to open the Conference.

## MR. ASADULLA OPENS SESSION

Mr. *K. M. Asadullah* after pointing out the importance of the part that the library played in the modern educational system and in developing the cultural side of humanity, regretted that the movement had not made much headway. What was needed was the establishment of more and more public libraries and arrangements for their proper upkeep.



India, the speaker continued, had not reached the same stage of advancement in the educational field as other countries, but he was inclined to believe that full advantage was not being taken of the opportunities that were offered in this respect. While their endeavour was to spread the library movement, they should not forget at the same time to create an awakening in the minds of their educated young men that their education did not stop where they thought it did, but that there was further provision for their education in the shape of libraries. In order to create this feeling, the establishment of Library Associations and the holding of Conferences were quite essential. The Madras Presidency did not lack much in the matter of Library Association and Conferences and he appealed to other provinces to follow her lead.

The library, Mr. *Asadullah* said, was a business house, but unless the management was efficient, much business could not be expected. The management of libraries should be entrusted to those who had an aptitude for that sort of work. For that purpose there should be provision for proper facilities of training in librarianship.

The question of the adoption of a standard scheme of classification for Indian libraries, he said, had been engaging the attention of those who were interested in the library problems of the country, so far as no palpable results had been achieved. He hoped that a scheme of classification could be recommended to the libraries in the country, and when that was done, it would be a right step forward in the history of the Indian Library movement. He finally appealed to the several Library Associations to cooperate in solving the many problems that faced them.

#### Presidential Address

*Kumar Munindra Deb Rai Mahasai*, President, in the course of his presidential address, said :—

The modern library movement in India is not even a quarter of a century old. It originated in 1910 in the progressive State of Baroda under the fostering care of His Highness the Gaekwar. It took more than a decade for some provinces in British India, to take it up. I believe Andhra Desa was first in the field. It had no hold in Bengal till 1925 when we held the First Library Conference and Exhibition in Bansberia in the district of Hooghly. The first All-India Public Library Conference was held in Madras in 1919 under the presidency of Mr. Kudalkar of Baroda. The second Conference met at Cocanada under the presidency of Mr. M. R. Jayakar, the third at Belgaum where the presidential chair was occupied by Deshbandu C. R. Das, the fourth at Madras under the presidency of my esteemed friend Dr. Promotha Nath Banerjee, in 1927 in which I happened to be present, the fifth in Calcutta in 1928 under the presidency of Sir S. Radhakrishnan, the sixth at Lahore presided over by Sir P. C. Ray and the 7th at Bezwada presided over by Mr. V. S. Ram. This Conference is being held for the third time in Madras. I hope as an outcome of this Conference since efforts will be made to mobilise and focuss attention with a view to direct our activities into proper channels in the best interests of the library movement.

The Library Movement is comparatively a new one and is not even a century old. Famous libraries did exist in ancient times in India and elsewhere. I do not wish to hark back into the hoary past to dilate on the ancient cultural centres of our forefathers. They were well-suited to the times in which they existed. The nine-storied magnificent library building "Ratna-Dadhi" of Nalanda University, the ancient libraries of Vikramsila or Taxila might have been a thing of beauty and a joy for ever of which we may justly feel proud, but libraries of that type cannot satisfy modern requirements. The whole aspect has changed. The old ideal has given place to new. The idea of preservation of books for their use by a chosen few no longer holds good. With the invention of printing, books in libraries have been thrown open to a wider public. In former days it was like storming a fortress to get access to a library, but now book-mobiles traverse the countryside far and wide and travelling and package libraries knock at the gate to gain entrance to one's house. The library movement is now principally meant to foster the habit of reading, to recruit fresh readers and to facilitate the supply of reading matter, in short to make libraries indispensable for readers and to make them as much popular centres as possible.

## NEED FOR INTENSIVE PROPAGANDA

One of the greatest difficulties with which the movement is confronted is the colossal ignorance of the public about its aims and objects. This want of a clear conception of the ideals we have in view has stood in the way of its rapid development. Intensive propaganda is therefore needed to bring home to the reading public future possibilities of the Library Movement in the uplift of the nation.

It has been found that the enthusiasm of members of some libraries wanes in course of time after the start is given and everything is left to the Secretary or the Librarian. This does not conduce to the healthy growth of libraries. Lack of public interest gradually makes the library no better than a lifeless repository of books. Care should be taken to keep alive the interest of members and one-man show should be avoided.

Most of the library buildings in this country are not suitable for the growth of libraries. A knowledge of library planning and technique is necessary in the construction of library buildings. It does not matter whether the library is a small or a big one. The planning should not be unscientific and provision should be made for further extension and expansion. Attempts should also be made to make them as much attractive as possible.

Public libraries should not be run on party lines. They should be above party and every body irrespective of party should have free access to them. These temples of learning should be the common meeting ground for all irrespective of creed, colour, sex and party.

Conflict with local bodies and officials should be avoided. Libraries should try to enlist the sympathy not only of the local people but also of local bodies within their respective jurisdictions, be it the Union Board, District Board or Municipality. Intellectual or cultural advancement being the library objective it should try to attract officials as well. Co-operation between all sections of the community will have most beneficial result. Purity of thought and action should pervade the whole library atmosphere and all controversy should be set at rest.

Promotion of mutual interchange of books and inter-lending of books between the Imperial Library and the Provincial libraries such as the Madras Connemara Library, the Allahabad Public Library and the Punjab Public Library is desirable to feed small libraries.

The Education Commissioner to the Government of India and the Directors of Public Instruction should be requested to include statistics relating to public libraries in their annual and quinquennial reports as done in Great Britain and Canada.

Lack of sympathy on the part of a majority of professional librarians in the furtherance of the library movement is to be deplored. It is high time for them to bestir and identify themselves with the movement.

Mr. S. S. Nehru's proposal for having the next International Library Congress in a central place in India and the participation of India in the International Library Federation is a commendable one and it deserves the careful consideration of this Conference.

## LIBRARY SERVICE FOR CHILDREN

I should like to ask the Conference to consider the duty of the Public Libraries towards children. The child of to-day is the citizen of to-morrow. In these days of financial stringency it may not be possible to establish separate libraries for children but a corner in each public library with juvenile literature may be set apart for them.

Excepting hospitals for Europeans where back numbers of pictorial magazines and light literature are supplied to patients there is no provision for catering to the intellectual needs of the hospital patients in most part of our country. I am told that Madras has taken the lead in doing the humane work of collecting and supplying magazines and books to the patients of hospitals. The commendable example set by Madras may very well be followed by library organisations of other provinces in India by collecting and supplying the right sort of reading matter to patients in close co-operation with the physician in charge. Public libraries should from time to time arrange Exhibitions to attract people to the library—no matter whether it be a Health Exhibition or Book Exhibition or Art Exhibition. Display of artistic posters in street corners or shop windows should be arranged to attract people to the Exhibitions. The library movement has not as yet been able to make

much headway in India to capture the imagination of my countrymen. The western methods should have to be adopted if we want the movement to thrive and vibrate throughout the length and breadth of the country. The programme of work may vary to suit local conditions but the ideal should be the same. Liquidation of literacy, diffusion of knowledge among all strata of society, cultural advancement and upliftment of the nation should be the guiding principle of the library movement.

#### RESOLUTIONS—Second Day—Madras—25th December 1934

The Conference met again to-day with *Kumar Munindra Deb Rai Mahasai*, the President in the chair. When a number of resolutions of general importance relating to the library movement in India were discussed and passed.

Mr. *L. N. Gobil Sundaresan* addressed the Conference on the usefulness of the library movement. He emphasised that it was one of the most important movements of the present century and that through the medium of the movement, mass education could be easily and successfully promoted.

The following were among the resolutions adopted at the Conference :—

"This Conference notes with satisfaction the measures adopted by the several Public Libraries' Associations in arranging for training classes in librarianship and with a view to supplementing and developing such academic work, appeals to the universities in India and Burma in general to institute courses in librarianship and make the necessary tutorial arrangements therefor.

#### INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

"This Conference invites the next session of the International Conference of Libraries to India and requests the executives of the All-India Public Library Association and the Indian Library Association to take all necessary steps for the purpose.

"This Conference places on record its appreciation of the pioneer Rural Library Service carried on at Mannargudi, Alamur, Tadepalligudem and Kuppam and hopes that their example will be followed throughout the country.

#### BOOKS IN VERNACULAR

"This Conference resolves that for the promotion of mass education greater importance should be paid by librarians to the acquisition and distribution of books and periodicals in the vernaculars ; urges all the local boards and Municipalities to institute and maintain public libraries throughout their areas, and appeals to provincial legislatures of the country to vote liberal grants to further and aid the formation and maintenance of free public libraries in all provinces without the imposition of any conditions.

#### PROVINCIAL ORGANISATIONS

"This Conference recommends the constitution of provincial organisations on the basis of linguistic areas to control and co-ordinate the work of the various public library associations and requests the provincial organisations so formed, to affiliate themselves to the All-India Public Library Association and to take immediate steps to do propaganda works for the furtherance of the public library movement.

"This Conference requests the management of the public libraries in the country to inaugurate under their respective auspices, activities conducive to the popularisation of the library movement and to the enlightenment of the public at large, literate as well as illiterate.

"This conference is of opinion that it is essential that copies of all books and other literature published in British India and Feudatory States be supplied to the various provincial State and Imperial libraries for presentation and for public use and that for this purpose the libraries may be conferred the status of a copyright library.

#### DISTRICT AND TALUK ASSOCIATIONS

"This conference appeals to the citizens throughout the country to inaugurate district, taluk and village library associations for the furtherance of the cause of the public library movement, and the establishment of public libraries.

"This conference is of opinion that library movement in India can be fostered and directed with greater success and advantage by the joint efforts of the All-India

Library Association and the Indian library association and requests the executive of both the associations to devise ways and means for this purpose.

"This conference places on record the valuable services rendered by Messrs. K. Nageswara Rao and V. Venkateswaralu to the library movement and bestows on them the titles of Ghanadatta and Andhra Bhashoddaraka respectively.

"This conference congratulates Mr. Guha Thakere on the publication of his "oriental scheme of classification" (Prachya Vargikarana Paddhati) and places the same for circulation and opinion."

A resolution was passed expressing deep sorrow at the demise of Prof. A. K. Siddhanta, well-known library worker of Lahore, and conveying the conference's heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family.

The conference offered its felicitations to His Highness the Maharaja Gaikwar of Baroda on his sixty years of successful and beneficent rule and placed on record the valuable services he had rendered to the Indian public library movement by his pioneer efforts and his continued interest in it.

The Conference was of opinion that the Indian Library movement should be fostered not merely by the spread of urban and rural libraries, but also by educating the classes and the masses through the ear and the eye. The Conference appointed a Committee with Messrs. S. S. Rajagopalan and D. T. Rao as conveners to devise ways and means and submit proposals to the central and provincial governments for absorbing as many educated unemployed as possible in the furtherance of the library cause.

## The Andhra Desa Library Conference

The seventeenth annual session of the Andhra Desa Library Conference met on the 25th. December 1934 at the 'Congress House', Madras under the presidency of Mr. D. T. Rao.

Mr. K. Nageswar Rao, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcomed the delegates.

### MR. K. NAGESWARA RAO'S WELCOME ADDRESS

Mr. K. Nageswara Rao emphasised the importance of the library movement among the masses. There were two ways by which this movement, he said, could thrive. One was by seeking the aid and support of the Government and another by the support of the people at large. In Andhra Desa the movement, to a very large extent, had thrived till now on the support of the public. If the workers of this movement looked to the Government for support, they would have to abide by the rules and regulations of the Government which to some extent might restrict the freedom of the movement. It was for the delegates to decide whether they wanted Government support or not. He then pointed out that there was no need to spend a large amount of money on the construction of big buildings and purchase of innumerable books. With a few collection of good books and earnest workers this movement might spread among the masses and remove the illiteracy prevailing among them.

### MR. D. T. RAO'S ADDRESS

Mr. D. T. Rao was then proposed to the chair. In the course of his address he said :—

"The decade and a half that has passed has been full of eventful history in the cultural progress of the Andhra country. A cultural revival on a mass scale has been attempted through the agency of the Libraries and how far such endeavours have borne fruit is the task of the historian to relate. Suffice it, however, to indicate, that amongst the two crores of people speaking the Telugu language, not only has literacy increased by more than 100 per cent since 1920, but a definite intensive



contact with the movements of progress has been established. The rise of vernacular journalism, the publication of cheap literature, the expansion of the printing industry, the larger use of books by persons of both sexes, and none the least, the dawn of a new cultural consciousness expressing itself in the social, literary, political and the religious movements of the period, are some of the outstanding features that characterise and bear witness to the cultural rise of Andhra Desa. These are the various phases of one single dynamic movement of the age, namely, the evolution of Indian Nationalism and if in the process thereof some have dedicated themselves whole-heartedly to the establishment and development of public libraries in Andhra Desa, be it said that they were the pioneers of the biggest social reformation undertaken in recent years.

The leaders of our Public Library movement will have to examine our social conditions and plan out a programme that will be responsible for bringing out men and women who can think truthfully, act intelligently and thus serve society as members of a good citizenry. This means that the primary principle of the subordination of the individual interest to the good of the whole must be recognized. A mere technical analysis of the requirements of Libraries in the shape of books, buildings, and periodical returns, will not serve our immediate purpose. That can be done in small regional conferences; what is now needed is a well-conceived plan of educating the Society to realise its own inherent cultural values. Such a plan, however, pre-supposes that the libraries must enlarge their sphere of activity and be prepared to adhere themselves to new intellectual attitudes.

We have to take advantage of the existing instruments of education like elementary school for carrying forward the objects of these public library movements and more specially for locating the Library and utilising it as an operating station of sound knowledge within the twelve districts of our Telugu country. There are more than ten thousand schools which can provide habitation for an equal number of libraries. The schoolmaster in charge might be given training in Librarianship in order to serve the interests of the locality with understanding and judgment. And in so far as the administration of such libraries goes, the District Boards who are in charge of elementary schools, might be well trusted to discharge that function efficiently. The elementary schools will, therefore, under such circumstances, form the base line of the library movement and to expand its usefulness will be the task awaiting the attention of our public men.

It rests on the Public Library workers as well as on our legislatures, publicists and social workers to compel the Government to divert for the purpose of the propagation and maintenance of the Libraries an amount commensurate with the needs of Andhra Desa. The halting method of doling out a few thousands for the entire presidency must stop and in its place an allotment of some millions must be demanded and until such a specific ear-marking is carried out there must be an unceasing agitation. To effect a change in the vision and the policy of the Government we need upright and fearless public men who would not be led into sponsoring legislation of an amateurish character.

"Before the State can take up and discharge its liability to the public in the organisation of libraries", Mr. D. T. Rao concluded by saying, "a great deal has to be done by our voluntary effort. The District and Taluk organisations that we have already, are active in certain areas and inactive in others. Some districts have libraries that could be counted by hundreds while others have a few that could be counted on our finger's ends. There are some libraries with opulent sources of income, while others carry on a miserable existence. There are again libraries staffed by persons of experience and training, while there are many which are ill-staffed and ill-equipped. This wide difference in location, equipment personnel and management gives rise to a new problem, namely, that of co-ordination in the working of libraries and the need for trained librarians. Until the various District Taluk and other subsidiary organisations act in harmony receiving stimulus from the parent organisation, the result will not be satisfactory. Hence the Andhra Desa Libraries Association will have to frame a year's policy and work ahead and pursue it with application and energy. Periodical inspection of Library organisations, regular conferences with leading librarians, and frequent convocation of regional conferences are likely to keep the movement alive. But stress has to be laid on the need for more workers of a trained character, who can work for the all-round prosperity of each centre. Henceforward the public library movement will have to embrace within its sphere active rural reconstruction. The Library, as an agency for this purpose, has been tried in America with great success and



if we turn to advantage each library within a particular area towards social reconstruction, the ultimate end of the Library movement will have been reached."

#### RESOLUTIONS

The Conference urged the following resolutions :—

The conference urged the executive of the Andhra Desa Libraries Association to popularise the ideals of the movement in Andhra Desa and the Andhra Granth-laya Sangha to publish a list of libraries in the Andhra Districts.

The conference recommended the formation of a Sub-Committee to devise ways and means to promote a network of libraries in all parts of the Andhra Desa and it was of opinion that the works of the late Andhraratna Durggirala Gopalakrish-nayya should be in every library in Andhra Desa.

Resolutions were also passed appealing to the people for generous support to the various libraries in the Andhra districts.

## THE ALL BURMA INDIAN CONFERENCE

The two-days' session of the First All-Burma Indian Conference under the auspices of the Burma Indian Association, commenced at Rangoon on the 29th. December 1934.

A large number of delegates from the districts was present to protest against the Joint Parliamentary Committee Recommendations, adversely affecting Indian interests and to devise means and measures to safeguard their interests.

About 5000 persons attended including a large number of labourers and about 400 delegates and 200 Reception Committee Members. Mr. M. M. Rafi, President-Designate, was cheered when he entered the pandal and amidst cries of "Mahatma Gandhi-ki-Jai", "Bharat Mata-ki-Jai", the deliberations opened.

This is the first time in the history of Indian politics of Burma that all shades of opinion gathered on a common platform to voice their grievances.

Mr. S. A. S. Tyabji, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in the course of his speech, sketched the growth of Indo-Burman relations. He detailed the vast vested interests of Indians and their connections with various trades, professions and services as well as their contribution to agricultural and industrial expansion. He warned that removal of Indians and Chinese, if effected, would have serious ill-effects on the export and import trade.

With regard to Chettiars, Mr. Tyabji opined the general financing in Burma would come to a stop, if such agencies were to be removed at present. He denied that Chettiars held to-day a large proportion of agricultural lands, pointing out that they were unwilling owners of whatever lands that had come into their possession. He explained that Indian labour was needed owing to insufficiency of indigenous labour and Indian labour would be required for many years to come. He advised Indians to forget their communal differences and stressed that the treatment which was being proposed to be given to Indians in Burma threw them in the category of foreigners, while Indians in Aden would be treated in an honourable manner. He hoped that the restriction of Indian entry would create a sense of bitterness in India and with separation, Indian shipping would not cease to have the hospitality of Burma. Concluding Mr. Tyabji demanded that the rights of Indians in Burma should be reserved in the same manner as was proposed to be done in the case of British subjects, domiciled in Burma and India.

#### Presidential Address

Mr. M. M. Rafi, President of the Conference, in the course of his address, criticised the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, opining that the J. P. C. treated them with scant regard in matters which were vital to their existence in Burma. He emphasised that the future existence of Indians in Burma depended largely on the realisation of all that the Conference

stood for. Indians had hoped that their rights and interests would be safeguarded when separation came, but now the Report had come as a shock.

Referring to Indian labour, Mr. Rafi explained that they persisted by virtue of their efficiency and their aptitude for work, which was distasteful to Burmans and not on account of their acceptance of lower wages. Chettiyars, continued Mr. Rafi, were the backbone of the economic life of Burma. They were not usurers but bankers who were supplying a vital need, although they conducted their banking business according to traditional Indian customs. He strongly deprecated the reference to Chettiyars as money-lenders.

Referring to the questions of the right of entry of Indians, the President said it was not a question that might be left to be decided by Burma alone. It was as much the concern of Burma to safeguard her own nationals as it should be the concern of India to protect the rights of the nationals, in foreign territory. He hoped that when the time came to formulate the basis of the proposed trade convention, between India and Burma, the Government of India, as well as the Indian commercial bodies and public men, would not lose sight of this fact. He emphasised on the other hand that there should be no restriction as regards the entry of persons of Indian domicile, including Indian States' subjects engaged in trade or business. Attacking vigorously the treatment proposed to be accorded to British subjects domiciled in India and Burma, Mr. Rafi pointed out that these legal restrictions would operate harshly against Indians. He mentioned the inadequacy of safeguards as regards services, professions and education. He asked whether the treatment meted out to the Indian minority in Burma in the matter of public services and education was in conformity with international law on the subject of minorities' protection. As regards Indian shipping, he trusted that the same reciprocal treatment that had been recommended between India and the United Kingdom would apply between Burma and India.

Referring to the proposal designed to protect cultivators by alienating Chettiyars, Mr. Rafi stressed that the Burma legislature should be given powers to pass discriminatory laws and legislation thus passed should be made applicable to those persons who came into the possession of lands at or before the date of separation for at least twenty years.

Concluding, Mr. Rafi deplored the proposed inadequate representation of Indians in the legislature and claimed special representation for labour, commerce, Chettiyars and landlords.

#### RESOLUTIONS—SEPARATION OF BURMA

At the resumed sitting of the Conference to-day, the proposal in paragraph 473 of the J. P. C. Report was strongly criticised by several speakers. It was mentioned that all other safeguards would be hollow and meaningless, if restriction was to be placed on the entry of Indians. This matter was a question of life and death to the Indian community.

Dr. R. S. Dougal, ex-Mayor, moved a resolution in this connection, which was unanimously carried.

Dr. Dougal stressed that the connection of Indians with Burmans was age-long and that they were brought by Britishers to develop Burma, with an assurance of safety. The resolution inter alia protested against the proposal to empower the Burma Legislature to enact legislation restricting or imposing conditions of entry into Burma of British subjects domiciled in India. It considered that such a proposal was wholly uncalled for and opposed to the principle formulated at the Burma Sub-Committee of the first R. T. C. and the policy enunciated by the Premier at the Burma R. T. C. and demanded that all persons of Indian domicile, including subjects of Indian States, shall have unrestricted right of entry into Burma after separations, a right which they now enjoy in common with other British subjects and which, in a separated Burma was proposed to be retained only in the case of British subjects domiciled in the United Kingdom. The resolution further demanded that as a measure of reciprocity, British subjects in Burma should be given the right of unrestricted entry into any part of India. Criticising the Joint Committee's statement that the Indian labourer, by accepting lower wages, tended to oust the Burmese labourer and lower his standard of living, as unfounded, the resolution pointed out that no special grounds for regularising or restricting Indian labour existed unless such a regulation was conceived in the interests of Indian immigrant labour in Burma as suggested by the Royal Commission on Labour and settled on the basis

of the convention between the Government of India and Burma. Concluding the resolution takes strong exception to the reference to Chettiars as money-lenders, who were bankers of high standing and honourable traditions. Hence the J. P. C.'s suggestion to restrict their entry is deplorable, as it lacks appreciation of the great services rendered by them in economic and other spheres of the development of Burma.

The session then adjourned until the next morning.

### RESOLUTIONS—Second Day—30th December 1934

A large gathering was present on December 30, 1934, the second day of the Conference.

Seven resolutions were unanimously passed protesting against the J. P. C. recommendations in connection with land alienation, education, profession, discrimination by local boards and local self-governing bodies etc., demanding the maintenance of the existing franchise qualifications and the preservation of the fundamental minority rights.

The resolution on commercial discrimination, which was carried, demanded protection for Indian interests, including commercial, banking and shipping, in the same manner as was recommended for British subjects domiciled in the United Kingdom, reserving at the same time the right to appoint and engage, at the discretion of their agents, servants and employees without any restrictions.

Over twenty speakers spoke on these resolutions, including Khan Bahadur Ahmed Chandoo M. L. C., Mr. A. M. Vellayan Chettiar, M. L. C., Mr. Mahomed Auzam and Mr. Abdul Baree Chowdhury.

Reference were made to the fact that it was Indians who first introduced Burma rice into India, where Burma was at present exporting rice worth over two millions. The question of Indian shipping which had been omitted by the Joint Parliamentary Committee would be affected under the present proposals, because the crew, who were mostly Indians, would not have the right of free entry. Discriminatory recommendation in respect of education would seriously affect Indian students. It was a breach of the former pledge and legal rights. The franchise proposal would affect Indian representation in the legislature on a population basis, unless the status quo was maintained. The session then adjourned until 2-40 p. m.

There was some heat and humour when the Conference resumed sitting in the afternoon, to discuss the resolution on Indian representation in the proposed enlarged Lower House, demanding 18 seats, comprising Labour 9, special interests 4, and general constituencies 12. One Labour delegate walked out protesting: "This Conference is for capitalists and not for Labour." The President said: "You are welcome to walk out. We must maintain order. No one has been shut out from speaking."

An amendment which could not be placed before the Subjects Committee owing to insufficient time was read out by the President. It sought representation for two Indian ladies, instead of one seat for Rangoon landlords. Two amendments demanding three and four labour seats respectively, after some discussion, were lost and the original resolution was carried.

Four more resolutions were unanimously passed urging (1) the abrogation of legal restriction in public services, without discrimination, against Indians regarding their right to enter public services and that there should be one Indian representative on the Public Services Commission; (2) appealing to the Indian Nation and the Government of India to take immediate steps to safeguard the rights of their nationals in Burma; (3) authorising the Burma Indian Association to convene the next session of the All-Burma Indian Conference whenever required to safeguard their legitimate rights; and (4) empowering the President to forward the text of the resolutions passed by the Conference to the proper authorities in England, India, Burma and elsewhere.

Over a dozen speakers spoke on these resolutions including Mr. J. K. Munshi, Mr. S. N. Haji, and Mr. R. S. Iyengar.

The President, in his concluding speech, asserted that Indians were not vagrants here. Their contributions should allow them to receive just treatment.

The Conference then concluded.

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# The Burma Anti-Separationist Conference

At the Upper Burma Anti-Separationists' Conference, held at Mandalay on the 30th. December 1934 *U. Chit Hlaing*, Anti-Separationist leader in the course of his presidential address, said that the proposed constitution for separated Burma was inferior to that proposed in the scheme outlined by the Premier on January 12, 1932, and it was admitted that the constitution was unsatisfactory, by the most moderate political parties in the country. The only course open for Anti-Separationists, therefore, was to reject the proposed "unsatisfactory and unacceptable" constitution, now being laid before Parliament.

*U Chit Hlaing* reiterated, in this connection, the resolutions passed by the All-Burma Anti-Separation Convention in 1934 and advised moderates to refuse to accept the Reforms. He added that the Joint Parliamentary Committee had wholly neglected to take into account the results of the last general election to the Burma Council, as also the separation resolution which was thrown out by the Council. He mentioned that in the December session of the Council in 1932, a resolution for separation was lost, while a resolution containing the terms for conditional separation and conditional federation was passed. Criticising the remark of the J. P. C. that Anti-Separationists' delegates preferred separation, *U Chit Hlaing* pointed out that it was contradictory to the evidence and facts disclosed by Dr. Ba Maw in the course of the discussions before the Joint Parliamentary Committee.

## Resolutions

Four resolutions were unanimously carried, rejecting the recommendation for separation of Burma and proposed constitution. The resolution *inter alia* expressed resentment and dissatisfaction with the recommendation for separation, which had been made in utter disregard of the clearest and most unequivocal verdict against separation and in favour of Federation given by an overwhelming majority of the Burmese electorate in the last Council election and also contrary to the many resolutions passed by the various Anti-Separationist Associations. The proposed constitution was totally unsatisfactory and unacceptable to the Burmese people and consequently they urged upon the British Parliament to reject the recommendations of the J. P. C. as far as Burma was concerned and allow her as desired by a vast majority of the electorate to enter the Indian Federation. The resolution warned the authorities concerned that if separation of Burma from India should be thrust upon them, the British Government would be held responsible for the consequences that may ensue.

The Conference at this stage concluded its session.

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**Economic, Industrial, Trade**

**AND**

**Commercial Development of India.**

**July—December 1934**





# The Indian Economic Conference

Opening Day—Patna—26th. December 1934

In the course of his Presidential Address delivered to the eighteenth Session of the Indian Economic Conference held at Patna on the 26th. December, 1934, *Mr. C. N. Vakil*, University Professor of Economics, Bombay, observed :—

The world is at present in an economic ferment and we find that the existing economic structure as well as existing economic relations have been completely upset. Neither the economic experience of the past nor the teachings of economic theory have proved a complete guide either in the understanding of the complex phenomena that have developed or in the search for their solution. Instead of this we find gigantic efforts being made to restore order out of the prevailing chaos in different parts of the world on new lines with the consequence that the whole basis of economic life is gradually undergoing fundamental changes.

On the one hand, we have the Russian experiment which involves a thorough overhauling of the social and economic structure and which has in view the communistic ideal. In order to achieve their ideals, the Russians have adopted a new method of economic approach, which has become popularly known as "planning". Though this was ridiculed at first, the rest of the world, differing in their aims and policy, have however found something to imitate in the Russian method, with the consequence that various countries are now adopting some sort of "planning" as the method to remove the existing economic ills. Two broad categories of this method may be distinguished. In some countries, a pre-determined economic and social policy involving a change in the basic structure of society leads to "planning" which is intended to put that policy into operation, for example, in Russia. In other countries, "Planning" is being adopted as a method to recognise the economic life to suit modern conditions without aiming at fundamental change in the existing order, though it cannot be denied that this is bound to involve a gradual drift away from the existing basis, for example, in the United States of America, and the United Kingdom.

We come to the conclusion, therefore, that though the meaning of "Planning" differs, though it has different grades or degrees, though the motives or outlook with which it is practised happen to be widely apart, it has come to stay, inasmuch as the State is now acknowledged as the chief guide and controller of economic life with or without a definite purpose, and adopts "Planning" as its principal method.

## EMPIRE POLICY

Such far-reaching changes are bound to affect every country, inasmuch as this change is a change primarily in the function of the State. The effect on India is being felt through England, because of our political relation. In other words, British policy and method are being reflected in this country in the gradual adoption or otherwise of the economic changes referred to above.

With wonderful adaptability, England realised the folly of sticking to laissez-faire and while revolutionary or spectacular changes were being adopted in other countries, she deliberately changed her entire economic policy as if overnight. The execution of the new economic policy in other countries has involved important repercussions in the political field. Such far-reaching changes involving interference in the details of the economic life of the people, which had to be promptly put into operation, would not be possible under the slow-moving machinery of modern democratic institutions. The rise of dictatorship in those countries where Economic Planning is the order of the day may be thus explained. Without changing her political structure, however, England managed to have the requisite forces and promptitude of a dictator in her National Government which eliminated party politics for the time being.

At the same time she realised that under the new conditions, with the growth of powerful nations, British supremacy could not be maintained unless Britain could weld the Empire together by new ties, chiefly economic. In consequence,

we find that during the last few years, the National Government in England has succeeded in bringing about a complete transformation of the economic policy of Great Britain, both within and without. We have the spectacle of the most highly industrialised country in the world trying to protect its agriculture and industry. The Gold Standard now stands discredited by being thrown overboard by its chief custodian. The home of Cobden is now a place where restrictions and controls in trade, industry and finance flourish in such abundance that Cobden himself would not recognise it.

The effort to bring the scattered parts of the Empire into line with this new Empire policy has resulted in important political developments. Systematic propaganda with a view to creating opinion and goodwill among the peoples of the different parts of the Empire has been carried on. This has been supplemented by other methods differing in each case with the political status of the Empire countries concerned. Persuasion and treatment on a footing of equality have been adopted with the Dominions ; an artificial or forced consent is the rule in this country ; and a policy of active coercion has been adopted in the case of Crown Colonies, for example, in Ceylon.

Whereas in dependencies and colonies, a free and frank consideration from their own points of view of the new policy has not been possible, in the Dominions where such consideration is possible, practical difficulties and controversies in the application of the new policy have been noticed. The need for the enforcement of such an Empire policy in future has involved the institution of a chain of Reserve Bank in Empire countries which are to work under the guidance of the Bank of England ; and permanent machinery to watch the development of trade and to suggest ways and means for co-operation may grow.

It may also in due course involve a corresponding change in the political structure of the Empire, which, however, is a problem beyond my scope. My present purpose is to trace the existence of an Empire Economic Plan and see its influence on Indian Economic policy.

We have literally to trace such a plan by putting together the various measures which have recently been adopted, for the Empire Economic Plan is essentially different from the Soviet Plan. Unlike the Soviet method, the Empire Economic Plan is not outlined as such beforehand ; nor is it [meant to be worked out within any defined time limit as in Russia.

#### CONDITIONS IN INDIA

So far as the economic policy of this country under British rule is concerned, it is well known that in the matter of trade and industry, British policy with free trade as the method was in operation in this country till 1924. The second stage is marked by the adoption of the principle of discriminating protection in 1924, when a definite departure in the industrial and commercial policy of the country was made. While the system is still in its infancy, it has been super-imposed, as it were, by the new Empire policy of which we have already spoken.

In the field of finance, it is equally well known that since 1899, the sterling standard has been in operation in this country though different names have been given to the system. The continued opposition to the adoption of the Gold Standard in India in the past, the ratio controversy and the linking of the Rupee to the Sterling since September 1931, are instances of the way in which British financial policy has worked in this country. The constitution of the Reserve Bank shows that British or Empire Policy will be imposed in this matter in the future as in the past.

We have thus two important forces working in the country ; on the one hand, the growing desire of the people for a better and a higher standard of life, and on the other hand, the needs of the Empire, both resulting in the realisation of the fact that the economic advancement of the country should be systematically fostered.

Though the desire is thus common, the outlook is different, which results in a clash of ideas and methods in connection with the measures to be adopted. This is so because, whereas Empire policy is the key to the methods of the Indian authorities, national policy is the key to the demand of educated India. Whereas the former requires the planning and arrangement of things to further the interests of the Empire, the latter naturally fears that in so doing national interests will suffer. Because of differences in political status, there is a consciousness that in the United Kingdom and in the Dominions, national interests will be safeguarded first and Empire interests will be looked after next, and there is a natural fear in the de-

pendent parts of the Empire that national interests will be subordinated to those of the Empire.

The imposition of the Empire Economic Policy on India is not without its counterpart in parallel measures for the development of the country within. What could not be dreamt of in the days of laissez-fair up to 1913 is now justified as a matter both of necessity and of policy. We have, in the first place, for the improvement of agriculture, and rural conditions generally, the work of well-organised bodies like the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research and the Central Cotton Committee. Measures for the improvement of the economic conditions of the rural population were considered at a Conference of Ministers and officials of Central and Provincial Governments held in April last. An intensive programme for developing marketing facilities for agricultural products was considered to be the measure most likely to lead to substantial results. A scheme of marketing surveys as a preliminary to devising methods for the better marketing of agricultural produce has now been formulated, and it is expected the work will be started soon. The position of the farmer is to be further improved by legislation for the relief of debt and by other measures. Some of this legislation which is still under consideration has aroused acute controversy and will be discussed by this Conference. The C. P. Debt Conciliation Act passed in 1933 was amended this year; the C. P. Money-lenders' Bill has become law; and schemes to start Land Mortgage Banks have been formulated in Bombay and Bengal.

The question of the low price, which the farmer has been receiving for his product has drawn the attention of the authorities. In this connection, the Crop Planning Conference held a few months ago, considered ways and means for the co-ordination of agricultural production for the country as a whole. Suggestions were made to Provincial Governments for keeping up the cultivation of different crops at a remunerative level. More definite action has been taken in the case of sugarcane and jute. Legislation has been taken in passed with a view to seeing that the price at which sugarcane intended to be used for the manufacture of sugar is purchased. Parts of the proceeds of the excise duty on sugar imposed this year is to be utilised for the purpose of helping the grower of sugarcane. In the case of jute, a scheme of voluntary restriction of the area under jute cultivation helped by official propaganda has been put into operation by the Government of Bengal, and the idea of compulsory restriction is in favour in some quarters. The object in either case is to enable the farmer to realise a better price for jute.

#### TRADE AND INDUSTRY

In the matter of trade and industry, in spite of the fact that as in other parts of the world, they are passing through a period of severe depression, the new departure in State policy has resulted in the growth of new industries on the one hand and of possibilities of trade in certain directions on the other. Though the protective policy inaugurated in 1934 is still in its infancy and has revealed many defects in working, it must be admitted that large industries like those of steel and cotton would have suffered a severe setback in the absence of protection, and the new industries like those of sugar and matches would not have come into existence or flourished.

The Ottawa Trade Agreement with the United Kingdom was followed by a Commercial Agreement with Japan; efforts are now being made for fresh agreements with other countries, and certain interests in Great Britain are arranging to get special privileges in trade. A trade treaty with Burma which is to be separated under the Federation scheme is in contemplation. Trade Delegations have recently visited Africa and Afghanistan, and Indian Trade Commissioners have been appointed in London, Hamburg and Milan, and are likely to be appointed in a few other centres in the near future. Some Provincial Governments have passed legislation with a view to giving financial and other assistance to small industries. Progress in this connection has been slow chiefly owing to the limited resources available for the purpose. This work is to be supplemented by the Bureau of Industrial Intelligence and Research, which has been attached to the Indian Stores Department. The function of this Bureau is to collect and disseminate industrial information, to assist in industrial research and to help the Provincial Governments and industrialists in the matter of industrial growth.

In the financial sphere, apart from the controversial issues such as the control of the Reserve Bank or of the exports of gold, we may say that the creation of

the Reserve Bank of India may supply a long-felt want for the co-ordination of the money market in this country with our currency policy, and generally give an impetus to the growth of a sound Banking system.

While these illustrations indicate the nature of the activities of the State in economic matters, it may be pointed out that the people in their own behalf have also taken an active interest in the economic development of the country. The creation of the Swadeshi spirit corresponds to the "Buy British" slogan in Great Britain and is an essential complement to the policy of protection. The All-India Spinners' Association has done useful work in connection with one important village industry, and its work is now to be supplemented by the creation of the All-India Village Industries' Association which will look after other cottage industries.

This rapid survey of changing events in the economic sphere in the world in general and in our country in particular, indicates that the trend of thought and of events is definitely towards a new economic order. Whether it is Capitalism or Socialism that ultimately succeeds; whether it is Imperialism or Nationalism that holds the field, the fact is obvious that no country is now allowing its economic life to drift and that every country is anxiously planning economic measures with a view to its prosperity and progress. It is inevitable therefore that the economic policy and the economic growth of a country will in the future be shaped to an ever-increasing degree by the State. At this juncture, therefore, the formation of a right economic opinion for an economic policy in general as well as for the solution of various problems in detail, is a most urgent need.

With the planning of economic measures, the planning and organisation of economic opinion must precede and be concurrent. A critical and scientific study of plans and measures, public and private, helped by informed and free discussions by disinterested persons, with a view to forming the right economic opinion in the interests of the country, will be a national service of the greatest importance.

#### SURVEY OF METHODS

In this connection, let us make a brief survey of the more important parties and their methods that are responsible for the formation of economic opinion in this country. We shall then be in a position to see whether we, as academic economists, can play a useful part.

We can say in a broad way that at present the economic opinion in the country is formed by (a) Government, (b) Commercial interests, British and Indian, (c) Legislatures and Politicians outside the Legislatures, (d) Financial and Economic Journals and (e) Academic workers.

So far as the Government is concerned, it influences economic opinion by a variety of annual and other reports, which it publishes; by the special studies of certain problems which it undertakes by the reports of Committees and Commissions which it appoints from time to time and by important speeches or pronouncements of members of the Government and high officials. The strong point in the opinion thus being formed is that it is supported by a systematic study of facts made by well-equipped department and highly trained officials.

At the same time, the publication of data and views is often made according to the convenience of the Government. The weak point is that it very often reflects the set notions of the Civil Service in the attempt to justify Government policy. Besides, there is an intolerance on the part of the Government of criticism of their policy in and out of the Legislatures and such criticism is often branded either as politically minded or even as racial in spite of the well-known fact that the Government policy and measures themselves may have been dictated by political and imperial considerations.

So far as British commercial interests are concerned, we find that they are better organised and have full-time workers for the study of the various problems that concern them. Well equipped with data and material suitable for their purpose, they are able to influence Government opinion more effectively; this is so because on the one hand they are naturally willing to support Imperial Economic Policy and on the other, they have an easy access to authorities, both in England and India, socially or otherwise.

So far as Indian Commercial interests are concerned, they are growing in importance in the formation of economic opinion, but compared with their stake in the country, their organisation is far from adequate. So far as a systematic study of problems is concerned, with a few honourable exceptions, it may be said to be



absent. So far as the staff of the Indian commercial bodies is concerned, it is mostly clerical and is not equipped for research and investigation of those manifold complex current problems which require knowledge and training, essentially different, and often superior to that possessed by the staff of these bodies.

Indian commercial interests usually find themselves in opposition to the policy of Government, but they are not always able to support their opinion with that convincing proof, which can come out of a systematic study of a high order. For example, in connection with the Ottawa Trade Agreement, a detailed study of the trade with non-Empire countries and of the effect of the Agreement on small industries have been organised by the Indian commercial bodies, the Government of India having omitted these aspects from their review, we are now left with a one-sided view of the situation.

#### AGRICULTURAL OPINION

So far as agricultural opinion in the country is concerned, it is unorganised and the position is such that it is often difficult to find what the true agricultural opinion is with reference to particular problems. The position is at the same time clouded by the fact that Government and British Commercial interests on the one hand and Indian commercial interests on the other are all fond of defending their policies in the name and interests of the farmer. Whereas this is so in the case of agriculture, the growing numbers of industrial labourers have some organisation varying in importance and usefulness in different part of the country. There is great room for improvement from the point of view of the industrial labourer in the existing state of things so far as the formation of opinion in his interests is concerned.

This brief analysis of the way in which economic opinion is formed shows that in proportion to the problem the existing arrangements for leading public opinion in regard to economic policy and problems are wholly inadequate. In making this observation I have not referred to the position of the academic workers, which I propose to discuss in great detail.

In other countries Universities and other academic institutions are highly equipped both in the matter of library and other facilities as well as in the matter of trained staff in each branch of Economics which makes specialisation possible. Compared with this equipment and compared with the magnitude of our problems, the existing equipment and other academic institutions in the matter of economic studies in our country may be characterised as poor.

#### NEED FOR ACADEMIC WORKERS

However, in other countries, academic work is supplemented by or encouraged by the organised work of other bodies. Besides educating public opinion by means of their publications, such bodies provide leaders of thought with useful materials. Very often such work anticipates and creates a demand for public enquiry or supplements the work done by the Government ; sometimes, it covers fields wholly ignored by Government and in any case, it affords an intelligent corrective to data and opinion made current by those in power. This kind of work also results in a constant flow of highly trained academic men into commerce and politics. In any case such contact between academic experts and men of affairs results in a co-ordination of ideas and a scientific study of facts without which life in modern countries would be guided and controlled in a one-sided fashion.

Unfortunately, even the limited resources that we possess in the academic sphere cannot be fully utilised for that larger purpose which I am contemplating in this discussion. To make my meaning clear, let us, for a moment, analyse the existing talent and resources in the form of College and University teachers that are available. The other class of workers in the field of economic studies are so few that one need not consider them in this connection.

In the first place there is a class perhaps accounting for a large percentage of the total of teachers who are poorly equipped which is no fault of their own ; the fault is of the institution and the system. The point however is that we cannot hope for any useful or original work from this class of teachers.

In the second place, there is a class of well equipped teachers who by their training and inclination are in a position to do useful work but are poorly paid and often over-worked. Though a fortunate few of these may in course of time go up the ladder, on the whole, we can have few hope from this class of teachers.

The third class of teachers, chiefly those in Government service in the superior grade, are as a rule both well equipped and highly paid. From the point of view of their own personal ambition, once secure of tenure in the service, the impetus in their case to do original work is comparatively little. But the great factor which works against this class of teachers is the existence of a positive hindrance in the form of restrictions by the authorities on the free expression of opinion.

The fourth class of teachers working in Universities and private institutions who are both well equipped and well paid, are comparatively few in number. They have opportunities for independent thought and facilities for work which though poor compared with those available in the west, must be characterised to be quite good under our conditions. The limited amount of original research work on different economic problems which has been published in recent years is mainly due to these causes.

It is obvious, therefore, that if academic workers are to play a better and more useful part in the formation of a right economic opinion in the country, we have to look to this fourth class of teachers and institutions employing them. If the status of the academic economist in public esteem is raised on the one hand, and if public and private resources are spent freely in order to encourage and develop the work of this class of institutions and teachers, a desirable link in the formation of a right economic opinion will be supplied at this juncture of our country's history. It would be highly desirable for those who are interested in this problem to think of ways and means for giving an impetus to scientific economic work of an independent nature. A few suggestions may, however, be made.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

(a) Endowment of Chairs and Fellowships for research work in economic problems; public funds should be spent to a much greater extent for this than hitherto; and it is an object towards which charity may be usefully directed. In addition, commercial bodies and magnates will do well to help in such endowments either for general or special studies.

(b) The expansion of the economic Departments of Universities and Colleges by the appointment of specialists in different branches of Economics who should be given facilities for such specialisation and not burdened with other work.

(c) Employment of a special research staff for the study of current problems by commercial and political bodies and organisations in the country.

(d) Encouragement of research publications and their wider use and publicity.

(e) Consultation with experts for advice on a footing of equality, either by Government, commercial bodies or political organisations, with adequate remuneration wherever necessary.

(f) The removal of restrictions by Government on their academic staff in the matter of expression of opinion on economic problems. At a time when the Government are trying to be responsible, if not responsive, such a measure would be a statesmanlike gesture, removing public prejudice against Government actions and enabling the formation of a healthy economic opinion.

(g) Government Departments, semi-government bodies and commercial organisations should welcome independent research workers and give them willing help. With the growth of democratic institutions in this country, Government departments and other parties would do well to realise that the petty-mindedness which usually characterises their attitude in this matter, is responsible for the accumulation or formation of prejudice which might well be removed and prevented by welcoming bonafide research workers and giving them due recognition and facilities.

(h) The encouragement by Government and commercial bodies to societies and associations doing organised research work.

(i) The improvement of existing Government machinery in the matter of collection and publication of economic and statistical information and of expansion in those cases at least in which the magnitude of work is such that private effort may not succeed.

So far as private effort is concerned, the suggestions made above cannot be carried out unless those in possession of wealth realise the full significance of this work in the interests of the country and are willing to spare funds for the purpose. Even if commercial bodies undertake to investigate their own

problems by employing their own, full-time staff, the work done by them will usually be of immediate and passing moment of the short-view type.

In order that a detached long view of current events may be taken, it is desirable that free scope should be given to academic workers, by allowing them adequate opportunities. The opportunities may be of two type.

- (1) Facilities to study practical problems of commerce and industry ; and
- (2) Financial help in the form of endowments of Research Chairs or Fellowships or adequate grants for specific research problems by recognised workers.

With a few honourable exceptions, it would not be untrue to say that in this country, there is a divorce between the academic economist on the one hand and the practical businessman on the other. The former is considered too theoretical and therefore of little use by the latter ; nor is the businessman willing to recognise the status and position of the academic worker in practice. The academic person on the other hand is not always willing to make efforts to understand the point of view of the businessman, and apply his mind to practical problem.

Moreover, the want of agreement among economists on important problems often scares away the businessman ; the latter must however realise that a difference of opinion either in any scientific work or in a practical problem is not an unhealthy sign ; that such a state of affairs is true of many other walks of life ; that the everchanging economic phenomena make it impossible for any two economists to look at them from the same angle ; and that given sympathetic understanding, co-operation, ways and means could be found to reduce such differences to a minimum. The businessman must realise that that attitude is bound to offend academic pride and keep the true academic person at a distance from the practical man. The academic person on the other hand must realise that he has much to learn by way of information and experience from the practical man of business, which he can never hope to obtain from books.

So far as the Government effort for carrying out some of the suggestions made above is concerned, it may be admitted at once that the authorities in India are quite alive to the urgent need of improving and expanding their existing machinery and of giving facilities to private workers. The unfortunate part, however, is that their action is not in consonance with their ideas ; financial and other considerations have come in the way of improvement and expansion, and the usual red-tape mentality comes in the way of giving facilities to private efforts.

#### ECONOMIC SURVEY

The Indian Economic Enquiry Committee reported in 1925 in favour of a scheme for an economic survey of the country and for the institution of Central and Provincial Statistical Bureaux. It was unfortunately left to a statistician and an economist to strike the bottom out of the scheme from its very inception ; for one is not in a position either to understand or to appreciate the attitude of Mr. Barnett-Hurst in his minute of dissent to the scheme of Sir M. Visveswarayya. Nothing came out of this ; in the meanwhile, however, other countries were developing special economic organisations, both for expert advice and investigation to help the executive in their work. In order to advise the Government of India on the best method of doing similar works in this country, Sir Arthur Salter, Director of the Economic and Financial section of the League of Nations, was invited to this country. His report issued in 1931 outlined the creation of a Central Advisory Council, each assisted by an expert staff for the purpose of advising the respective Governments on current economic problems. Nothing substantial came out of this report either. In January 1933, Sir George Schuster, the then Finance Member, was good enough to address the Sixteenth Annual Indian Economic Conference held at Delhi on the subject of an Economic Survey for India and the improvement of Economic statistics. He invited the co-operation of the Conference and of the Indian Economic Association in that connection. In response to that suggestion, a special Committee of the Association prepared and submitted a memorandum to Sir George Schuster and offered co-operation on behalf of the Association which was unfortunately treated with scant courtesy. By the end of the year, Dr. Bowley and Mr. Robertson were invited to this country to report on the same problem. Mr. Robertson's presence at our last Conference at the Annamalai University, followed by a visit of one or both of these gentlemen

to most University centres gave opportunities to Indian economists among others to explain to them the kind of work that was being done by them and what could be done given the necessary facilities and encouragement. In their report published in the beginning of this year, they advocated a scheme for an Economic Census of India with special references to the Census of Production and reorganisation of statistics. The scheme involves rural and urban surveys and contemplates close co-operation with Indian Economists through the Universities. For reorganising the status of the academic economist in general and of the Indian Economic Association in particular in the scheme advocated by them we may well pay a tribute to these distinguished fellow workers in the same cause elsewhere. Though nothing, as usual, has yet come out of this report, if the Indian authorities and commercial magnates will take a lesson out of this report by recognising the status of the economist and the value of his work, and by helping and encouraging him, a great national service will have been rendered.

Though these reports have been shelved, a few minor efforts have been made, perhaps in the right direction. We have now Boards of Economic Enquiry or similar bodies in the Punjab, the U. P. and in Bengal though the constitution and functions of these Boards vary in different provinces. Some expansion of the work of the Department of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics has recently taken place in addition, a few more publications are being issued by that Department. This is of such a limited nature compared with the magnitude of the task, which can be seen from the report referred to above, that one may well despair of any substantial result. Besides the inherent limitations of Government work in this connection in any country, there are obvious limitations of a special nature of Government work in this country. Added to these limitations when the Government is not in a mood to do more than the bare minimum compelled by necessity of circumstances, the need on the one hand of greater pressure on the Government to do more, and of private initiative and on the other, is all the greater. This necessary corrective to State effort which is provided by private effort in other country, is a specially urgent necessity in our country, in view of the peculiar conditions, and it is to be expected therefore that those concerned will like a long view of this matter and an organised effort in this right direction.

#### ASSOCIATION'S DUTY

While criticising the existing agencies for the formation of economic opinion in the country and making suggestions for their improvement, I would be failing in my duty if I did not ask the members of the Indian Economic Association and of the Conference to think of the ways and means by which they can play a more active and a more useful part in the national service. The two important ways in which the Association has been doing its work for the last 18 years are the publication of a Quarterly Journal and the holding of an annual Conference in co-operation with the Universities. Without in any way discouraging the work of our Editorial Board or of the Managing Editor of the journal at Allahabad, I think it would be easy to agree upon the proposition that there is a great room for improvement in the quality of the material published in our journal and also in the time of its publication. The Annual Conferences have provided meeting places for an exchange of views, chiefly for academic workers and those interested. In this connection, there is considerable room for improvement. I venture to make a few suggestions which may form the basis of discussion, and if adopted by general agreement, will, I hope, enable us to improve both those features of our work.

In the first place, we may organise local centres, chiefly in University towns or other places wherever suitable arrangements are possible. The members of the Executive Committee who, as a rule, belong to different University centres, may undertake each in his own sphere to organise such a local centre. In other places, other organisers should be found. The object of the organiser in such centre should be to bring together the members of the Indian Economic Association resident in the local area and those few selected persons, who by their knowledge and experience or position, are likely to help in the formation of a study group. This group so formed may arrange for weekly or fortnightly meetings for the frank discussion of problems. The discussion should be preceded by an original study or investigation of the problem by one or more members of the group. The subjects of such study should be in the first place those fixed for discussion at the ensuing Conference and secondly those of local interest. The ultimate result of such discussion may be a



paper either jointly written by some members of the group or by an individual. So far as future conferences are concerned, the papers submitted will have thus been the result of systematic study and mature deliberation. At the same time, there may be other material resulting from such study and discussions, which may well find a place in the journal. If in the course of time we find that this system works successfully and that we have more material than we can afford to publish in the Journal, we may think of the arranging for the issue for special bulletins on special topics. Arrangements will have to be made for some contact between the centres during the course of a year, so that each may be aware of the progress of work in the other. In some cases, one centre may be in a position to help another by the supply of information or by advice. The annual report of the work of the Association would then contain information regarding the work in different centres, which means that the centres will have to keep the central office informed of the work done in each place. The work of the Secretary of the Association is bound to increase and he may have to be provided with suitable assistance for the purpose. This would result in live and continuous work throughout the year by the members of the Association in different groups, and when the result of such a work is pooled at the end of the year at the time of Conference, we shall certainly have something of which the Association and Conference can be proud. This will also enable those who for one reason or another, are not able to attend the Conference and of the work of the Association, because they would at least be in a position to help the study group in the local centre by their co-operation. This work should as far as possible be done in co-operation with Economic Societies or similar organisations, if any, are in existence at any centre. These study groups should be able to obtain the help and co-operation of the Government Departments and of Commercial bodies in this work. By some such arrangement, which is in no way revolutionary and which would enable to develop gradually from the existing nucleus that we possess, we should be in a position to make our opinion both weighty and valuable, to raise our status high in public esteem, to make the membership of the Association a matter of pride and privilege, and to make its work in general a thing which those concerned cannot afford to neglect. In organising on the lines I have suggested the financial aspect has been borne in mind ; though there will be some additional office expenditure, it will be within our means and will be worth while. It should be difficult for us to be able to increase our membership if our work improves, in which case increased fees will more than meet the additional expenditure. The work of the local centres will automatically attract interested persons who will be willing to join the Association.

#### “A RAY OF TRUE LIGHT”

I realise that the success of our work may depend on co-operation, and in some cases, even the financial assistance of Universities, commercial bodies and persons and of the Government ; but we cannot expect to get such assistance unless we have gone a step forward ourselves and created a demand for it. In spite of difficulties, I am optimistic, that once the value of our work is appreciated on its merits such assistance would be forthcoming. In doing so, however, we shall have on the one hand to give an assurance and on the other to ask for privilege that our work shall be on scientific lines and in the true interest of the country, it shall therefore be free from pressure of outside parties or of those with preconceived notions. The task of scientific investigator is difficult because he cannot please parties if we worship science and truth. His work should be therefore all the more valuable and deserving of encouragement by those who realise that at this juncture in the history of the country, an organised progress in this connection is both desirable and urgent.

Out of the darkness created by systematically fostered prejudices and organised selfishness, a ray of true economic light may yet penetrate. The force of that light for good will depend on the devotion of the disinterested economist to his science, helped in his difficult task by those in power and authority in private and public life. We can only pray that the foresight necessary for bringing forth such devotion and such help will not be lacking, and that the privilege of an atmosphere of freedom in which alone creative thought may blossom will not be denied to the economist ; otherwise the thinking that is done to order or in an atmosphere of fear and suspense will be like the incoherent mumbling of a man in dotage, the precursor of the approaching end.



## READING OF PAPERS

### Recovery Plans for India

Papers were then read in the Conference. *Mr. M. P. Gandhi* of the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, in the course of his paper, "Economic Planning for India—A Supreme Necessity," declared :—

"I wish to lay stress on the fact that in any future scheme of planning, undue emphasis should not be placed on the development of large-scale industries. India is particularly suited to the development of middle-class industries, and cottage industries, and it is such industries which will solve the problem of unemployment to a great extent and create conditions in which there will be a more equitable distribution of capital".

He said that he wished to lay stress on the necessity of a correct economic policy for India which should aim at reducing the chronic unemployment and under-employment in the country. The precipitate fall in the price of agricultural commodities, had serious repercussions on the economic condition of the masses in this country. The consumption of various commodities had gone down.

He added that India should have unrestricted power to enter into Trade Agreements with foreign countries in a manner which would be advantageous to her.

Along with a policy of protection, conditions must be created in which middle class and cottage industries could be easily carried on in competition with large-scale industries and for that purpose adequate State aid must be offered. The local as well as Central Governments should institute schemes for helping small-scale and cottage industries by establishing co-operative societies, etc. What was needed was a bold policy of expansion. It was equally essential that the Government should take action in consultation with and after securing approval of accredited representatives of public opinion in the country.

### Aspect of Economic Planning

An economic council which would help them to foresee and tackle with the complex economic problems of the modern world, which would engage itself in continuous study of current economic problems, of the development of trade and industry in each province, which would complete and co-ordinate the statistical and other information required by the Executive and the Legislature, which would invite the attention of both these to important economic changes and tendencies and which would suggest to the Government plans for solving fundamental economic difficulties as those connected with the stabilization of trade and the development of national resources, was the economic organisation suggested by *Dr. B. V. Narayanswami Naidu* of Annamalai University in his paper on "Some Aspects of Economic Planning for India". *Dr. Naidu* said that it was desirable that such a Council should have only the minimum of paid servants and that it should contain within itself leaders of industry and labour and experts in economics among others. True statesmanship and patriotism lay not so much in envisaging the future as in taking effective steps to make the dreams of to-day the realities of to-morrow.

### Scope and Methods

*Dr. H. L. Dey* of the Dacca University in the course of his paper on "Scope and method of Economic Planning in India" said that economic planning involved, firstly, a full knowledge and understanding of the specific environment which could be acquired mainly through the organisation of economic and statistical intelligence. It implied also the power of controlling the environment, which would be very much limited in their case by the safeguards and special powers proposed in the forthcoming constitution. Another limitation was that set by the institution of private property. These limitations would suggest the scope and method of economic planning in India, which should consist at present of a five-year programme for the planning of planning.

### Programme of Public Works

*Dr. P. J. Thomas* of the Madras University in his paper on "A plan For Economic Recovery" showed that the breakdown of purchasing power, which was the most disquieting factor in the present economic situation, could be remedied by a suitable programme of public works, which would not only increase employment and purchasing power, but would also provide the country with a better economic equipment. This was, he added, one of the most important aspects of economic

planning to-day. A more comprehensive type of planning might not be practicable in the circumstances of India, but no serious objection could be urged against a cautious policy of loan expenditure on urgently needed works of public utility.

#### **Ameliorative Measures**

*Dr. Gyan Chand* of the Patna University, in his paper on "Essentials Of Economic Planning For India", urged the view that he was for economic planning for India. But he saw that neither they had clearly understood what it meant and involved nor had they the means at their disposal for carrying out a far-reaching and comprehensive change like planned economy. He suggested that they should redistribute Government portfolios, enlarge the functions and utility of the Tariff Board, appoint marketing officers, and carry out economic surveys, make use of the fiscal convention to get better terms in international exchange, establish land mortgage banks and have demonstrations of improved methods of cultivation. These were all useful measures and they would have ameliorative effect. But let them not confuse the issues. If the peculiar conditions of their national life or some immutable laws of being make gradualness inevitable, let them proceed gradually, step by step, from precedent to precedent and build slowly but surely.

#### **Economic Planning for India**

*Prof. D. G. Karve* of the Ferguson College, Poona, in his paper on "Economic Planning For India" drew attention to a few of the more important features and difficulties of planning in general and of planning in India in particular. The political, administrative and economic difficulties set forth by him threatened to make the adoption of a full-fledged scheme of planning in India only a remote possibility. By the careful selection and assiduous development of manufacturing and commercial pursuits the needed balance must be imparted to Indian economy. Indianisation of banking and insurance, the promotion of internal migrations and external colonisation, the conclusion of trade agreements with all friendly countries on purely economic grounds and as unrestricted basis as possible, the greater protection of tenants, particularly in the U. P. and the Rayatwari provinces, the adoption of organised poor relief and other measures based on the principle of social solidarity, the gradual introduction of collective insurance among their industrial population and the general replacement of unregulated money-lenders by organised banking were a few of the most pressing objects of national economy which a comprehensive economic plan ought to attempt.

#### **Fallacies of Planning**

In his paper on "Fallacies of Economic Planning" *Mr. Khagendra Nath Sen* of the Calcutta University, discussed the question of Economic Planning as a phase of economic nationalism arising from post-War economic conditions and warned economists against the complacent assumption that it meant the end of the era of the pre-War competitive system. He traced the course of recent economic developments and concluded that though the future was yet indefinite, there were certain tendencies which pointed in the direction of a return to the competitive system on a more rational basis.

#### **Population of India**

*Mr. H. Sinha* of the Calcutta University, in his paper "Is India Overpopulated", discussed the validity of some of the tests usually applied for determining overpopulation, and described some practical devices for judging whether there had been any departure from the optimum with reference to which alone over population or underpopulation could have any meaning. Some relevant statistics of real income per head were quoted in this connection. It was pointed out that fuller data were necessary in order to give a definite answer to the question whether India was overpopulated or not.

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# The Industries Conference

Simla—9th. July to 11th. July 1934

A Conference of the Ministers and Directors of Industries from the various provinces and important Indian States, together with experts, commenced at Simla on the 9th. July 1934 and continued till the 11th., under the chairmanship of *Sir Frank Noyce*, Member for Industries and Labour, in the committee room of the Assembly buildings. No regular agenda was supplied to the delegates and the proceedings were not open to the press.

The main object of the conference was to discuss the schemes of various provincial Governments for the development of the handloom and weaving industry for which the Government of India had allotted Rs. 1 lakh annually for five years. The conference would also consider, among the major items, the proposals to establish a central industrial intelligence and research bureau which were discussed at the fifth Industries Conference held in Delhi in the first week of April. The various provincial Governments would come forward with their respective schemes for the development of both the handloom weaving industry and research in the sericulture industry.

The Associated Press learnt that delegates from certain Indian States would first of all ascertain whether it is true that States are to be excluded from the discussions relating to the handloom weaving industry and, if so, why. They hold that they have an important part to play in this, as in the promotion of the silk industry. Perhaps the Viceroy's speech last year when his Excellency emphasised the need for the cooperation of Indian States with British India for the common advancement of both will be quoted in support of the inclusion of Indian States' representatives during the discussions relating to the handloom weaving industry.

The Associated Press understands that the question of establishing a central clearing house in industrial intelligence will be discussed first. If the conference approves of the Government of India's scheme, a bureau will be set up attached to the Indian stores department, the establishment of which is said to have already had a marked effect in promoting the development of Indian industries. The bureau will keep in close contact with industrial markets and current business, collaborate with the provincial directors regarding industrial research, publish bulletins on matters connected with industrial research and development, assist industrialists with suggestions and also in the organization of industrial exhibitions in India. The Government of India in a memorandum to the delegates have pointed out that the bureau will be organized on self-contained lines in order that in time it can be separated from the Stores department and formed into an independent department. Though full details of the cost of organizations have not yet been worked out the Government of India have tentatively decided to provide funds in the first instance to the extent of Rs. 5 lakhs spread over three years. One of the main sources of information relating to industrial development being the provincial departments of industries the Government of India will ascertain from the conference the extent to which the local Governments will cooperate in making the scheme a success.

## U. P. GOVERNMENT'S NOTE ON SUGAR AND OIL INDUSTRIES

The Associated Press understands that the United Provinces Government in a note to the conference pointed out that the sugar and oil sections of the Harcourt Butler Technological Institute are already well equipped for industrial research relating to those two branches of industry, and if financially assisted will be prepared to the proposed central bureau and function as its special branches for both research and intelligence.

## KASHMIR GOVERNMENT'S NOTE

The Kashmir Government in a note stated that they had already allotted over Rs. 1 lakh for setting up machinery to conduct research in the technique of

carding, spinning and weaving and that if substantial assistance is forthcoming they will be prepared to equip the research station with necessary staff and even trained apprentices. The Kashmir Government want Rs. 5,000 annually for five years.

### Provincial Government's Proposals

How the various local Governments in British India propose to develop the handloom industry will be known by the Industries Conference tomorrow. Each province will of course be given a free hand to tackle the problem facing handloom weaving industry, but they must all keep in view the general policy that cooperative buying and selling on behalf of handloom weavers should be developed.

#### MADRAS

In Madras, except in the Nilgiris, all other districts are handloom weaving areas. According to the 1931 figures, the total number of handlooms at work in the presidency was 1,93,000, and the number of persons employed was 6,41,000. Considering the quantity of cotton twist and yarn alone consumed by the handloom weavers and the number of people dependent upon the textile cottage industry, it is urged that a sum of Rs. 1,32,000 in the first year and Rs. 1,22,300 in subsequent years should be contributed to this province. In the initial stages various forms of direct assistance are proposed to be accorded to free weavers from their indebtedness to sowcars and bring the weavers into the fold of cooperative societies. The crux of the whole problem of handloom weaving is marketing and the Madras Government propose to establish a provincial cooperative marketing society to be managed by a board consisting of 15 members, of which the Director of Industries will be the president and the Principal of the Government Textile Institute will be the secretary. It will be necessary for the society to appoint an expert marketing officer with necessary staff. The society will open sales depots in suitable centres in the presidency like Madras, Madura, Salem, Coimbatore, Bellary, Conjeevaram, Peddapuram and Cannanore. Steps will also be taken to revive the existing weavers' societies in their respective areas, the provincial society giving each primary society a grant of not more than Rs. 250 per annum to meet its expenditure.

#### BURMA

The Burma Government have submitted a long memorandum in which they claim more than what they would get as one-tenth share on the ground among other things, that Burma has the largest number of looms of any province in India and that she has no interest in the mill industry, for the protection of which the Indian Tariff (Textile Protection Amendment) Bill was passed. The duties imposed by this bill fall without any corresponding benefit to the people, the bulk of whom are agriculturists and as the handloom industry is an important subsidiary occupation of agriculturists it deserves a greater amount of share in the grants-in-aid. At present the handloom industry, which is scattered throughout the province, is unorganized. With a grant-in-aid, it is proposed to establish a permanent exhibition of the handloom weavers' products and a research station, as well as an organization of demonstration parties the aim of which will be to introduce improved appliances and methods of weaving.

#### BOMBAY

In Bombay the grant-in-aid is proposed to be spent at the commencement of starting district industrial associations for helping weavers in the matter of marketing their products, most of the working capital being supplied to the associations by cooperative banks. At least five such associations will be necessary to start with, each to be allotted Rs. 5,000 per annum. The constitution of the district industrial association will be on the basis of co-operative sales agency and will be open to the association to sell goods to members and non-members.

#### UNITED PROVINCES

In the United Provinces they have several schemes, the total cost of which will be Rs. 2,20,000 on account of non-recurring charges and Rs. 50,000 for recurring expenses. The schemes include a provincial intelligence bureau, a provincial marketing organisation, provincial designing section, a provincial refinishing plant and

a provincial research institute and also a survey of the handloom industry in the province.

#### CENTRAL PROVINCES

The Central Provinces Government wishes to establish weavers' co-operative societies at Nagpur, Kamptee, Jubbulpore, Ellijpur and Burhanpur with a hundred members in each society. There will be depots at each centre for the supply of raw materials and for the sale of finished cloth. The total expenditure, for the five societies, is established at Rs. 63,000 in the first year. It is said that in the Central Provinces the handloom weaving industry provides employment to 100,000 adult workers and about 250,000 dependant. Forty per cent of the total quantity of cloth consumed in the provinces is produced in handlooms.

#### ASSAM

In Assam the condition of handloom weavers is said to be unhappy owing to the trade depression and competition from outside. Every householder, be he rich or poor, possesses a loom.

The Assam Government propose two much needed schemes for the consideration of the Government of India : (1) the starting of a commercial course as an addition to the Government Weaving Institute at Gauhati ; (2) the reorganisation of the Government emporium at Gauhati to increase its usefulness and expand its activities. The emporium, after its reorganisation, can become a central institution to undertake such schemes as may be necessary for developing, co-operating, buying and selling on behalf of handloom weavers and for the better organisation of the industry.

#### BENGAL

The Bengal Government proposed to reconstitute the Board of Industrial Union, appoint one weaving and dying expert for each industrial Union and to train up weavers in new designs of patterns, textile, etc. One supervisor with technical knowledge of weaving is proposed to be appointed for every 20 weavers' societies. The union will require a lump subsidy of Rs. 5,000 rupees each. Marketing offices are proposed to be appointed to supply information regarding marketing conditions to the provincial society as well as of industrial unions.

#### PUNJAB

The Punjab Government propose to have a central organisation with branches in weaving centres. These depots, in collaboration with the cooperative societies will help in the supply of suitable qualities of raw materials at cheaper rates, supply information as to the qualities of cloth to be purchased, as also in their standardization and advertisement. Then there will be a marketing officer, with assistants, who will advice the central organisation as to the types of cloth to be purchased and at what price. It is proposed to locate the central organisation at Amritsar, with branches in outlying important weaving centres like Ludhiana, Jalalpur, Hoshiarpur, Jattan, Multan and Panipat.

#### SERICULTURAL RESEARCH

Sericultural research, for which Rs. 1 lakh is to be allotted annually for five years, will be discussed by the conference, when the representatives from Madras, Bihar and Orrissa, Assam, Mysore, Kashmir, Indore and Gwalior States, the Central Provinces, Bengal, the Punjab and Burma will explain their respective schemes.

#### MYSORE

Mysore produce about 50 per cent. of the total output of raw silk in India, and according to the Tariff Board, the State spends Rs. 2 lakhs annually. The cost of mulberry leaves constitute about 60 per cent. of the total cost of production of silk. Hence the Mysore State proposed research work in manurial experiments, improvement of local mulberry by grafting and other methods. As regards sericulture, several experiments are suggested to increase this production of cocoons per unit and improve their quality. Thirdly, economies in the cost of reeling are proposed. The total cost of the schemes is a little over Rs. 2 lakhs non-recurring and Rs. 67,000 recurring. The Mysore Government has also outlined



a scheme for starting a silk waste spinning factory at a cost of Rs. 68,000, which, they state, is a legitimate charge on sericultural research.

These schemes of the Mysore Government are supported by an elaborate memorandum by the Mysore Silk Association, which deals exhaustively with the measures to be adopted for improvement in the cultivation of mulberry, rearing of cocoons and reeling of silk.

#### MADRAS

In Madras the principal place where rearing of silk worms and reeling of cocoons are carried on extensively in purely cottage conditions is Kollegal taluk, close to Mysore. Other centres where research work can be carried on are Coonoor, Kuppum, Hosur and Palmer. As the Madras Presidency produces one of the best indigenous varieties of silkworms and grows a good variety of bush mulberry it is urged that a sum of Rs. 45,500 at least be allotted for undertaking research work in the first year and about Rs. 22,000 in the succeeding years.

#### BIHAR AND ORISSA

The Bihar and Orissa Government state that the rearing of silk-worms offers great possibilities.

#### CENTRAL PROVINCES

The Central Provinces Government would like to conduct intensive scientific research schemes to improve Tussore silk rearing and improve the volume of the cocoon output by setting up a small organisation at an estimated cost of Rs. 4,000 per annum.

#### ASSAM

The Assam Government state that out of 12 districts silk rearing is practised in eight and a start has already been made in two of the remaining districts. Nowhere, perhaps, in India, except in Assam, are three species of silkworm cultivated. The extension of the industry as a whole is hindered for want of funds. The Assam Government recommend the establishing of a central research institute in Assam.

#### KASHMIR

The Kashmir Government has a scheme for establishing an institute. It points out: 'No other country or part of his Majesty's dominions is endowed by nature with such facilities for the success of the sericultural industry as Kashmere and Jammu. The State is now producing annually 20,000 ounces of silkworm seed, 40,000 maunds of cocoons and 25,000 lbs. of raw silk. The industry affords a means of livelihood to 50,000 families. The industry is now hit by competition from China and Japan. The Kashmir Government wants a provision of Rs. 25,000 annually for subsequent years in order to give a start to the proposed institute.

#### CENTRAL INDIA

Mr. J. B. Hutchinson, officiating director of the plant industry in Indore, says:—'With proper research work, there is every reason to believe that sericulture, which has already been attempted in Central India, would be successful.' He stressed the urgency of this question by a mention of the fact that the immediate problem in Central India is the provision of an alternative crop in place of opium.

#### BENGAL

Bengal has also supplied a scheme for silk cleaning and twisting machinery at the Government institute.

#### PUNJAB

The Punjab Government state climatically submontane tract of the province is very suitable for silkworm rearing.

#### BURMA

The Director of Agriculture, Burma in a note, states that the difficulty experienced up to date by the department in extending the industry has been due to the prejudice which exists among Buddhists against the killing of the larvae, which is an essential part of the process of silk worm rearing. At Leiktho, in the Toungoo hill tracts, where there is a small sericultural industry supervised by the Italian

Roman Catholic Mission most of the people are non-Buddhist Karens, and this difficulty does not arise. There are mulberry gardens at 'Maymyo and Paukkaung.

The scheme for research proposed by the Burma Government is estimated to cost Rs. 16,000 non-recurring and Rs. 10,000 recurring in the first year.

Gwalior has also submitted a scheme.

### Sir Frank Noyce's Speech

*Sir Frank Noyce*, in the course of his speech in opening the Industries Conference, said that they were there to implement the passage in the Government resolution on the Provincial Economic Conference, dealing with the proposal to constitute industrial intelligence and research on sound and practical lines and to decide on the best way of distributing grants which the Government of India had given for research in sericultural industry and for the development of the handloom weaving industry.

Regarding the first he said: 'We said why we are anxious that the Bureau should be of the utmost value to you and that we want you to tell us how we can make it of the utmost value to you. One question which was put to me in my recent tour, both in Calcutta and Bombay, was "Why are you attaching this Bureau to the Indian Stores department and would it not be better to have it as a separate organisation?" I think that a perusal of the note that the Chief Controller of Stores, Sir James Pitkeathly, has placed before you will give a sufficient answer to that question. We are attaching it to the Indian Stores department because the Indian Stores department is under the very able guidance of Sir James Pitkeathly whose work on behalf of the development of the Indian industries and especially of the smaller Indian industries, has been recognized throughout the length and breadth of India (hear, hear). We are attaching it to his department because it is a live department. In giving him additional work which he has very readily undertaken to carry through we are placing at your disposal the benefit of the experience and knowledge of all the officers of his department, and we are also placing at your disposal the resources of the test house which that department maintains. If any of you would like a closer acquaintance with the working of the Indian Stores department, if you would like to know what it does in the way of testing and reporting on the different products manufactured in this country, I would suggest to you that if you are ever in Calcutta you should visit the Alipore test house when you will receive a very warm welcome and everything will be explained to you.

"You will have gathered that we are not starting a scheme on the very extensive lines suggested in the course of our discussions last year. Some of you would have liked to see us start a Council of Industrial Research somewhat on the lines of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research. I explained the objections to that last year. I need not repeat them. Most of you were here last year and you know what they are. One very great objection is of course the financial one. Another is that if we were to start an Imperial Council of Industrial Research we should not really know at present the best lines on which to start it. It is for these reasons amongst others that we are proposing to start on this small scale. Although it is on a small scale and although the money we have at our disposal only amounts to Rs. 5 lakhs to be spent in three years I cannot myself help thinking that a very great deal can be done with that money if we use it in the way foreshadowed in Sir James Pitkeathly's note.

### POSITION OF THE INDIAN STATES

'There is one very important point and that is the position of the Indian States in respect of this bureau. The position of the Indian States differs very greatly in regard to the three questions which are coming before us to-day but in respect of this Bureau of Industrial Intelligence and Research we hope that they will come in as full collaborators and co-operators in the scheme. We are anxious that they should come into the scheme on exactly the same terms as the Indian provinces. I may say that there is no question at any rate at this juncture of charging any fees for the utilisation of the services of the bureau. Those will be placed at the disposal of the provinces and of the Indian States without any charge whatever. But we hope that in return for our doing so they will also place their own sources of information and their own research institutes, if they have any, at the disposal of

the bureau so that it may work for the greater good of India as a whole. I hope it will be obvious to you that this bureau may form the nucleus of a much bigger organisation in the year to come. What we are asking you to do is to let us try out his experiment, and if it proves successful then to decide in consultation together in what directions its operations can be extended and how it can be made more useful.

"Now I turn to the question of sericultural research. I had better make it perfectly clear that the position of the States in that matter is not the same as it is in regard to the Bureau of Industrial Intelligence and Research. I may here bring in for a moment the question of handloom weaving and show you where the difference lies. In regard to sericultural research we are, it is true, dealing with an all-India question. But the money available is British India money and we should not be willing to make any grants to the States unless it is for research work which will be of use to British India. The money we have available for sericultural research is apparently as shown by a close study of the memoranda which have been placed before us by the States and the provinces a mere drop in the ocean and it will be a very difficult matter indeed to decide how it is to be used to the best advantage. I think you may consider it desirable that we should appoint a sub-committee of our members to consider this matter and it will be for us to consider whether a large portion of the one lakh available could not be best utilised in obtaining the services of a first class sericultural expert who could come out to India and advise us how best to spend what little money we have. The second question which will have to be considered is whether it is advisable that we should appoint a sericultural committee, more or less a permanent sericultural committee, to deal with the administration of this grant and generally to co-ordinate the effort in regard to sericultural development. The third question is whether again in view of the small amount of money we have it would not be advisable to spend the greater part of it on the production of disease-free seed. These seem to me the three main questions which arise in regard to sericultural research.

"Now I turn to the question of handloom weaving. There, as I have explained, we are dealing with British India money and I am afraid that as things are at present, though they may be different under the federal constitution to which we are all looking forward, there is no money available for expenditure in Indian States. But if the States would like, as I hope they will, to take part in our discussions on the subject, if they would like to give us the benefit of their experience and of the work they have done, if they would also like to learn if they can, as I hope they can, from British India and profit by the experience of British India, they will be very welcome indeed to do so. The amount we have at our disposal in this case is, I am glad to say, considerably larger than in that of sericultural research. I cannot say exactly how much it is. The Government of India have promised that they would spend on the handloom industry an amount equal to the proceeds of an import duty of a quarter anna per pound on imported yarn up to 50 S. We do not yet know what the amount is likely to be. The estimate which Sir Jospeh Bhore gave in the Assembly was about Rs. 31 and half lakhs, but we have reason to think that it will probably be a little more. This year we shall only get 11 months' proceeds but I think we can work more or less on a figure somewhere in the neighbourhood of Rs. 5 lakhs for a year. I shall deal with the question of procedure in a moment, but I would say now that the questions which seem to me most important are the extent to which the cooperative movement can be utilized in saving the handloom industry, whether there are any matters of common interest such as the question of designs and that of improved machinery which could with greater advantage be undertaken at the centre, and the extent, if any, to which the grant should be used for instructional and similar purposes.

"There is one very important point we have to bear in mind in regard to both sericultural research and also the handloom industry, and that is that the grant which is being placed at our disposal is for five years only, and that any schemes which we approve will have to be based on that assumption. Another point which should be mentioned is that we are here to-day really in the position of advisers to the Government of India. The Government of India stipulated, in promising this grant, that it must be spent on approved schemes, that the schemes should be placed before the Government of India for consideration. This is not, therefore, entirely a matter for my department, though I have no doubt that the recommendations of a conference such as this of which I am a member will carry the utmost weight with the Govt. of India and will receive their most sympathetic consideration."

### Sir J. Pitkeathly's Speech

After Sir *Frank Noyce* had opened the conference, Sir *James Pitkeathly* outlined the principles of the proposed Industrial Intelligence and Research Bureau and emphasised the dependence of the proposal on the cooperation of the provinces. At the same time he pointed out the assistance which the Indian Stores department could give to the industry.

After that the conference appointed two committees to consider in detail the memoranda received from provinces making claims to shares in the grants for handloom weaving and sericulture. Memoranda were also received from a number of Indian States proposing schemes for expenditure of part of the money available for agriculture within their boundaries.

The general discussion on the handloom weaving industry was followed with a view to securing the benefit of the experience of experts present. The principal subjects discussed were cooperative organisation of handloom weaving, best arrangements for improving designs and securing the fullest use of all improvements in machinery and the general principles which would govern the allocation of grants.

In winding up the proceedings for the day the chairman suggested that the best criteria for allocating grants would be the number of looms in the province, the amount which the province was spending on handloom weaving at present and the expenditure which it proposed to make in future.

### Decisions of Sub-Committees

The whole of 10th. July was taken up with the deliberation of the handloom sub-committee and the 11th. July morning with those of the sericulture sub-committee. The full conference met again in the afternoon and first accepted unanimously the general lines of the proposal for the formation of an industrial intelligence and research bureau. The delegates from every province and State promised whole-hearted support for making the bureau a success. The conference adopted the reports of the handloom and sericultural sub-committee. In the case of handloom weaving industry the decision was taken that grants should be distributed in the provinces in the first year as to one half in proportion to the average expenditure by the local Governments on the improvement of the handloom weaving industry during the last five years and as to the other half in proportion to the consumption of yarn in the handloom industry in the provinces and that local Governments be asked to revise their schemes in the light of the sums which they could obtain in this way and criticisms of their schemes which were made by the conference. The conference also decided that 15 per cent. of the grant be reserved to the Government of India for distributions to minor administration and provinces which equitably required extra assistance.

As regards sericulture the decision of the conference was that the sum available for distribution, namely, rupees one lakh a year was so small that it would be spent in a way which promised most immediate benefit to the industry, namely in increasing the supply of disease-free seed. It was also decided that an imperial committee be set up and attached to the bureau of industrial intelligence and research. The conference concluded after an interchange of compliments. Some delegates expressed special gratification that the conference was likely to become an annual event.

A sub-committee of the Conference discussed on the 11th. July the position of the sericultural industry in connection with the promised grant of a lakh for research work. As advised by Sir Frank Noyce in his opening speech the sub-committee approved the proposal to appoint a permanent imperial sericultural committee under the auspices of the Bureau of Industrial Research to be attached to the Indian Stores department. This sericultural committee will consist of representatives from the silk growing provinces in British India, namely, Assam, Bengal, Madras, Punjab, Bihar and Orissa and Burma and two Indian States, Mysore and Kashmir. The sum of one lakh for research was considered too inadequate for the promotion of the industry and it was decided to make a request to the Government of India for an enhanced grant.

# The Assembly Ottawa Committee Report

The Assembly Ottawa Committee's Report was presented by *Sir Joseph Bhore* in the Legislative Assembly on the 31st. August 1934.

*Sir Abdur Rahim* and *Mr. K. C. Neogy* appended a minute of dissent to the Majority Report, in which they held—

(1) The preferences given by the United Kingdom to our agricultural products have not, to any extent that matters, helped India to recover the lost grounds. On the other hand, the Preference given by India to the United Kingdom has adversely affected our foreign markets.

(2) The heavy deficiency in our exports is mainly due to the weakening of our foreign markets and the small increase in the exports that there has been during 1933-34 as compared with 1932-33 is not such as to reassure us that India is on the fair way to economic and financial recovery.

(3) Having regard to the economic policies adopted practically by all other countries, trade agreements on the basis of mutual interests seem inevitable.

Therefore, they recommend definite agreements on the system of quotas with all important countries, so that our trade position may be established on a surer basis.

The Ottawa Agreement, they express the opinion, should at least be modified to the extent necessitated by such agreements.

*Mr. B. Sitaram Raju* submitted a separate minute of dissent in which he submitted Dr. *Meek's* Report to a detailed analysis and came to conclusions entirely different from those of the majority of the Assembly Committee.

## Majority Report

"The United Kingdom has proved a steadier market for both preferential and non-preferential Indian commodities than the foreign countries in general.

"The general tendency of mutual trade between India and the United Kingdom has been tending towards an equality of exchange.

"The preferences given by India have not adversely affected Indian consumers of the Indian revenues.

"The import preferences have not proved detrimental to any Indian industry.

"On the whole, the Ottawa Trade Agreement has been for the mutual benefit of the contracting parties".

These were the general conclusions arrived at by the majority members of the Assembly Ottawa Committee appointed to examine the report of Dr. D. B. Meek, Director-General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, on the working of the Ottawa Agreement. The following are extracts from the majority report:—

"Though we do not necessarily subscribe to all the deductions or conclusions contained therein, Dr. Meek's report constitutes a very fair and impartial review of trade conditions since the initiation of the preferential scheme.

### EFFECT OF PREFERENCES ON EXPORTS

"The following are our general conclusions in each case:

Rice: The preference to rice has been of value to India, whose position in the United Kingdom market has improved both relatively and absolutely during the period under review.

We would invite the attention of the Government to the necessity of ensuring that the effectiveness of the preference is not diminished by the invasion of the United Kingdom market by foreign paddy and we would also ask them to consider whether a preference for rice cannot be secured elsewhere, particularly in Malaya.

The preference has secured to the Indian exporter a very substantial share in United Kingdom market which had been practically lost to India and to this extent it must be regarded as definitely of benefit.

Tea: The preference has maintained India's position vis-a-vis Ceylon in the United Kingdom market and it will ensure to India a fair share in that most



important market in the event of any increase in her export allotment under the restriction scheme.

**Tanned Skins :** The evidence before us does not warrant the conclusion that the preference has produced an appreciable effect on exports from India.

**Jute Manufacture :** Any advantage which has accrued from the preference on jute manufactures has been in the nature of insurance against loss of market rather than a positive gain to the Indian manufacturer. The preference is of more value in that it permits the Indian exporter to compete on equal terms with the British manufacturer.

**Teak :** India has improved her position relatively and absolutely in the United Kingdom market.

**Woollen Carpets :** We are agreed that India has secured a definite advantage from the preference on woollen carpets.

**Tobacco :** (a) unmanufactured : We are impressed with the potential value of this preference in view of the increasing production of cigarette tobacco in India.

(b) Manufactured : We are doubtful whether the preference on manufactured tobacco has had any definite value for India.

**Castor Seed :** We are of opinion that this preference has been of value and has enabled India to make a certain amount of headway at the expense of her competitors.

**Pig Lead :** The preference has been shared with other Empire countries and Australia appears to have benefited to a greater extent than India.

**Castor Oil :** While the Indian product has consolidated its position in the United Kingdom market at the expense of foreign oil, countries other than the United Kingdom have also increased their demand for Indian oil. We cannot, therefore, say with any certainty that the preference has benefited the Indian exporter in general.

**Linseed Oil :** No advantage has resulted from this preference.

**Cocoanut oil :** The preference has been of little benefit to India.

**Ground-nut oil :** A very definite advantage has resulted from the preference. India's total exports have increased significantly in the past two years and the United Kingdom market has been almost completely captured.

**Rape seed and sesamum oils :** The preferences in respect of these oils have little value in themselves though, here again, as in the case of cocoanut oil, we recognise their safeguarding value.

**Coffee :** The preference has not enabled India to do more than maintain her position in the United Kingdom market.

**Coir :** The very marked increase in respect of coir mats and mattings is clear evidence of the beneficial effect of the preference.

**Ground-nuts :** Though the preference has enabled India to gain some advantage, other Empire countries have gained to a greater extent.

**Sandalwood oil :** The preference has secured to India a greater share of the United Kingdom market at a time when exports to foreign countries were decreasing.

**Granite setts :** The preference on granite setts has been of advantage to India in so far as it has enabled a new line of trade to start.

**Magnesium chloride :** The evidence so far available does not justify the conclusion that the preference has yet been of benefit to India.

**Cotton yarn, Cotton manufactures, magnesite, spices and wheat :** The preference on these commodities has not been of benefit up to now.

**Raw cotton :** We are agreed that, on the whole, Dr. Meek's Report contains a fair statement of the advantage which has accrued to India from the undertaking of His Majesty's Government under the Ottawa Agreement.

**Supplementary agreement in respect of iron and steel :** We are of opinion that the assured off-take of pig-iron to the United Kingdom under the Supplementary Agreement was of value to the Indian pig iron producer and we are equally satisfied that the agreement in respect of sheet bar has been of some advantage.

**Colonial preference :** We are of opinion that the preferences granted by the self-governing Colonies have had little effect on Indian trade.

We note that Ceylon has not given full effect to the preference agreed upon at Ottawa. We recommend the cocoanut report and the resumption of negotiations with Ceylon with a view to arriving at a definite decision in respect of our trade relations with that Colony.

It is our opinion that in each case which was the subject of our scrutiny, the preference has to a greater or lesser extent benefited the United Kingdom. We consider that on the whole, Dr. Meek's appreciation of the effect of each of these preferences as set out in Chapter II of his report as a fair estimate of their value, and that preferences, in so far as they have moderated or counteracted the factors making for a decrease in imports into India, have been of definite value to the United Kingdom.

#### EFFECT OF PREFERENCES ON PRICES

In Chapter III of the Departmental Report are to be found the detailed statistics of prices of a very extensive range of commodities in respect of which preference is enjoyed by imports from the United Kingdom. We have made a careful and detailed analysis of these statistics which has shown that while in a few cases prices of both British and non-British imports have risen and, in some what more numerous class, foreign prices have risen while British prices have fallen or remained at their former levels, in the great majority of cases there has been a general fall in prices. We are satisfied that where prices have risen it has been due to special causes unconnected with preferences.

On balance, we are of opinion that the Indian consumer has not been prejudiced by the preferential scheme.

Effect of preferences on customs revenue:—On the material before us, therefore, it is clear, that the preferences have not adversely affected Indian revenue.

We are informed that only one industry, viz, the Aluminium Utensil Manufacturing Industry has represented that it has been adversely affected by the operations of the Ottawa Preferences.

We are of opinion that it has not been established that the industry in question has in any way been affected adversely by the Ottawa Preferences.

#### GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

In the course of our deliberations it was suggested that as a result of the Ottawa Trade Agreement, certain foreign countries had imposed restrictions on imports from India by way of retaliation.

We have, therefore, had prepared a list of the restrictions imposed by foreign countries since 1927 which shows also the reasons for the restrictive action.

It appears, that in no case was the restrictive action retaliatory in nature or specially directed against India.

Our general conclusions which must be regarded as subject to the reservations set out in paragraph 2 and 7 of the report, may be summarised as follows:—

(a) The export trade in articles which enjoy preferences on importation into the United Kingdom forms at the same time the most important and the most stable part of our total export trade.

(b) The United Kingdom has proved a steadier market for both preferential and non-preferential commodities than have foreign countries in general.

(c) Since the initiation of the preferential scheme, the general downward trend of the United Kingdom's import into India has been checked and shows an increase.

(d) The general tendency of the mutual trade between India and the United Kingdom has been tending towards an equality of exchange which has practically been established in the first year of the preferences.

(e) The majority of the preferences enjoyed by India in respect of her more important exports have been of definite value to her export trade.

(f) The preferences given by India have similarly been of definite assistance to the United Kingdom and where they have not led to an increased trade, they have at least tended to counteract factors operating in the opposite direction.

(g) The mutual preferences between India and the non-self-governing Colonies have had little effect on trade exchanges.

(h) The preferences given by India have not adversely effected Indian consumers or the Indian revenues.

(i) The import preferences have not proved detrimental to any Indian industry.

(j) On the whole, the Trade Agreement has been for mutual benefit of the contracting parties.

### Minute of Dissent

The following dissenting note was appended by Mr. *B. Sitarama Raju*, to the Report of the Assembly Ottawa Committee on Dr. Meek's Report on the working of the Ottawa Preferences. The following are extracts from the minute :—

On the information available to us, there has been no increase in our production taken as a whole.

On the other hand, some of the commodities, where increased production was expected, showed even a decline in production as for instance linseed, coffee and so forth.

There has been no expansion of our total trade directly attributable to preference. Excepting in the case of woollen carpets and rugs, where there has been a definite expansion of trade due to preference, there has been no definite case of expansion on any commodity due to preference.

There was in a very few cases some improvement in trade noticed, but that improvement was noticed in our exports to foreign countries as well as to countries granting preference even to a greater extent.

Therefore, the improvement cannot be credited to preference. In the same way preference cannot be held responsible for the decline of trade in certain commodities which were expected to expand in countries granting preference when the trade in those commodities showed improvement in countries not granting preference.

If we take the United Kingdom market alone into consideration, and ignore the condition of our other markets, in some cases improvement in trade is noticed. But we have to take the whole trade into consideration. If values are taken into consideration and if figures of trade from Indian States also are included, there has been some expansion both in preferential and non-preferential items in the year 1933-34 to some extent as compared with 1932-33, but the year 1932-33 is partially affected by preference.

If we go back to the immediate non-preferential year, 1931-32, that year as well as the next year 1932-33 are years of acute depression. If we study the previous year's figures, we find the values obtained are far below those figures. It may also be noted that there has been in 1933-34 a general trade recovery to some extent. Therefore, it cannot be said that there has been expansion due to preference."

Mr. Das then points out the need for complete statistics of industrial production, the lack of which has disabled him from pronouncing to what extent Indian industries were adversely affected.

### INDIA'S TRADE WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES

*Whether our trade with foreign countries was affected and whether our relations with them suffered?*—The answer to both these questions is in the affirmative. The advantages which the United Kingdom secured as a result of this scheme enable the United Kingdom to displace the trade of foreign countries in our markets to a large extent.

It has been noticed as a definite policy with all those countries to purchase from only those countries who are purchasing from them. To a certain extent as our exports are mainly raw material, it is not easy to displace them at once. However, when and where possible, that they have been doing so is evident.

Restrictions have been increased against our exports year after year by some of our principal customers. We have a recent instance of Rumania refusing to allow our skins and hides landed at their ports. It is said that the restrictions imposed on our exports, whether it be leather, oil or oil seeds, are due to other causes; and that they did not specifically attribute to Ottawa. We do not expect them to attribute Ottawa as the cause and court United Kingdom's animosity openly. It is significant that these causes are newly discovered by them.

*Whether by standing out of the scheme we would have suffered?*

Commodities in the production of which British capital is invested and British racial interests are involved, this question whether by standing out of the scheme the trade would have suffered, should be answered in the negative, scheme or no scheme.

With regard to those commodities, in which the Indian interests are involved by standing out of the scheme, they would lose ground in those commodities where other Empire countries compete, all other things being equal. There are few commodities which satisfy both these considerations. Reference to individual items will

be made where necessary hereafter. But India's agricultural produce finds market mainly in countries outside the United Kingdom. Therefore the loss of United Kingdom market cannot be said to be irreparable.

#### EFFECT ON CONSUMERS

*Whether consumers in India were affected by the tariff changes in the imports?* It was expected that prices of the goods of countries not given preference would be brought to the level of the prices of goods imported from the United Kingdom which is given the lower preferential rate. An examination of the import statistics shows that in some cases goods sold by non-preferred countries are sold cheaper while in some cases the British goods are sold cheaper. Further, the exchange, the reactions on the prices of non-preferential goods due to the foreign countries putting up the prices to compensate them, the loss on preferential goods and several other factors, have to be taken into consideration.

To assess the burden or relief on the consumers, we have to isolate the effect of preference from the effect due to other causes. We are unable to do so. I am unable to agree with the majority on their assumption that the consumer was not adversely affected. A minute examination of each commodity price and reasonable elimination of other factors would alone enable us to come to anything like approximate valuation.

The majority of the Assembly Committee, who supported the scheme, were influenced by the consideration that the scheme provided immense scope for definite expansion without diversion of our export trade in certain commodities. On these commodities, at any rate, they were very definite. I propose to examine the results obtained on them in the first instance and see how far those expectations which influenced their decision were realised.

The majority while agreeing that no direct benefit accrued on preference in respect of cocoanut oil, linseed oil, rapeseed and sesamum oils now persist in believing that the trade with the United Kingdom in these oils is likely to be valuable as substitutes. There is no doubt some improvement has been made in the exports of our castor oil, because there is a greater general demand in the world markets for the Indian castor oil, which also is cheaper. Even in this Indian exports to countries not granting preference have increased much more than to U. K. The only oil which has shown increased exports to U. K. is the groundnut oil. But the heavy loss on groundnuts is not compensated by this increase.

The other extravagant hope on which the support for the scheme was based is the great results which were expected on the following commodities. The majority of the Ottawa Committee in para 4 of the report observed as follows:—

"We consider that preferences given on the following commodities are definitely valuable:—coffee, coir, yarn, coir matting, oil-seed cake and meal, spices, teak and other hard woods, woollen carpets and rugs, tobacco, castor seed, groundnut and pig lead. From the figures available it would appear that the "money value" of the preferences given in respect of the commodities amounts to £1,781,000 or about Rs. 227 lakhs. This figure illustrates the value of the preferences in assisting these commodities to retain their existing market in the face of severe competition from non-Empire countries. The total value of the trade in the same commodities capturable by Empire countries is estimated at £30,562,000 and, assuming that, when other Empire countries compete with India, India's percentage of the exports, from all Empire sources into the United Kingdom remains the same as it is to-day, the value of the additional market in the United Kingdom which is open to India will amount to £10,106,000 or Rs. 13,47,50,000."

The actual results go to show that from ensuring a preferential value of Rs. 227 lakhs we have registered a decline of Rs. 31 lakhs and far from securing an additional market in U. K. worth Rs. 13 crores we have lost Rs. 4 crores and 42 lakhs in the total trade. I know that when the supporters of this scheme in the Special Committee estimated these results they were speculating and it turned to be a bad speculation. I am unable to accept their conclusions on the value of preference on some of the export commodities.

#### LINSEED

The Indian delegation to Ottawa as well as the majority of the Assembly Committee on the Ottawa Agreement laid considerable importance to the preference on our linseed trade and expected immediate expansion by the stimulus of pro-

duction owing to the capturable market in U. K., and to the fact that India is the sole supplier within the Empire.

INDIAN PRODUCTION		
	(Acres in thousands)	(Tons in thousands)
1931-32	3,309	416
1932-33	3,299	406
1933-34	2,257	377

The above figures show that there was no expansion but on the contrary a decline is noticed.

#### INDIAN EXPORTS TO ALL COUNTRIES.

	Quantity.			Value.		
	1931-32	32-33	33-34	31-32	32-33	33-34
U. K.,	14,133	14,270	15,825	1,646	1,654	1,369
Germany	9,844	9,480	10,316	1,364	1,331	1,335
Netherlands	400	200	3,984	45	32	523
Belgium	760	345	10,204	90	39	1,266
France	44,213	21,611	41,483	5,321	2,501	5,008
Spain	3,849	1,650	9,100	533	209	1,053
Italy	14,619	10,578	21,690	2,376	1,813	1,125
Greece	3,100	2,983	5,654	342	317	638
Australia	10,038	9,415	11,958	1,153	1,018	1,360
Japan	6,259	150	1,404	746	17	169
Other countries	13,068	1,511	104,825	1,489	175	13,206

From the above figures, it would appear that exports to United Kingdom have increased very largely in the year 1933-34 and this was largely attributed by our colleagues to the beneficial results of preference, notwithstanding the fact that our chief competitors, Argentine and the United States of America, suffered failure of crops to the extent of one third and two fifth respectively in the year 1933. A perusal of our export table would show that not only United Kingdom but many other countries have purchased in much large quantities than they ever did before.

Therefore, I am of opinion that the increase in our exports in 1933-34 cannot be attributed to preference. Further, it was said that the British oil crushers got a rebate of 15 shillings a ton on linseed oil produced out of Argentine seeds under the customs draw-back system. This rebate affects our trade both in the seed and oil.

One of the members of the committee observed that.....15 shillings a ton is not much. When it is worked out, it came to 5 per cent, that is to say, 50 per cent of the preference is nullified. It is grossly unfair on the part of the United Kingdom to say the least about it. No wonder there had been no exports of Indian linseed oil, and had it not been for the failure of Argentine and U. S. A. crop, the effect would have been marked on the trade of the seed also.

#### RICE

India paper is a rice importing country, but from the point of view of Burma the export trade is important. Preference has not helped production. On the other hand, Indian imports have been increasing considerably.

#### TEA

The tea restriction scheme of 1933 having come into operation, the effect of preference has been obscured by this scheme.

Our colleagues on this committee were of opinion that if we did not enter into the Ottawa Agreement, Ceylon would have enjoyed a preferential market in United Kingdom to our detriment. Ceylon did not ratify the agreement, but is enjoying preferences as though it did, and refused to respect the obligations although India, which ratified the agreement and paid the price in full and is therefore entitled to better position than Ceylon, is made to suffer, because the suffering is confined to Indian interests.

#### JUTE

The raw material is India's monopoly. India's export trade lay mostly outside the United Kingdom market being only 8 per cent of the total Indian exports.



Indian exports to United Kingdom during the period preference has been in operation, both in quantity and value, registered considerable decline. From the value noted in the report, it would appear that our export trade with countries granting preference did not show decline in the same proportion. From the table of United Kingdom imports of a part of this trade, namely, piece-goods, the imports in 1933 have registered considerable decline. In the neutral markets, our chief rival Siam scored against us for the loss it sustained in United Kingdom market, and secondly, the percentage share of the countries granting preference showed a decline from 76 per cent in 1932-33 to 67 per cent in 1933-34, and thirdly our prices for teak having declined our imports have been stimulated.

#### TOBACCO

Our export figures of unmanufactured tobacco register an increase in our exports to United Kingdom in 1933-34. But the increase is also registered in the case of our exports to countries not granting preference. While I agree that preference had been of some assistance in United Kingdom market, I wish to lay emphasis on the fact that we have been enjoying preference since 1919 and that it had been noticed that the consumption of pipe tobacco which India exports has been gradually falling off in the United Kingdom.

Indian exports of manufactured tobacco are cigars mainly. Our total trade registered a decline in the years 1932-33 and 1933-34. Therefore, I do not consider preference had any considerable effect, and wish to lay emphasis on this point that India can not hope to capture the United Kingdom market from Cuba.

#### RAW COTTON

With regard to the undertaking given by His Majesty's Government to make increased use of raw cotton we find in pursuance of that they set up the Indian Cotton Enquiry Committee to implement that undertaking, but soon after as the Mody-Less Pact came into existence, the effect of the previous agreement with which we are concerned is obscured by this later agreement.

#### PIG IRON

The table of Indian exports of pig iron shows that in years 1931-32, 32-33 and 33-34, our exports to United Kingdom have been 20 per cent respectively of our total exports, while foreign countries were taking 79 per cent, of which Japan was a chief customer.

An examination of the important table of United Kingdom shows that during the last three years, 1931-32, 32-33, and 33-34, the United Kingdom market is restricting its imports owing to her own home productions. In 1933, the year of preference, United Kingdom did not take from foreign countries and took a little less than what she took us in the previous year. However, it cannot be said preference has no value to us, but it can be said that the value should not be exaggerated, in view of the United Kingdom's increased home production and the unlikelihood of our replacing the home product in their market.

With regard to the Iron and Steel Agreement regarding the galvanised sheets, we wish to emphasise the fact that an important consideration for the agreement was the use of iron bars. The abandonment of the scheme now under the present Steel Bill takes away an important consideration for the previous agreement.

#### EFFECT ON EMPIRE COUNTRIES

The majority of the Committee came to the conclusion that the effect of the scheme was neither advantageous nor disadvantageous to India.

I am unable to subscribe myself to such a general conclusion. The most important country in these relations with us under this scheme is Ceylon, and in several commodities India gave preference to Ceylon in return for a similar concession to us in some commodities. India carried its part faithfully and Ceylon refused to carry its part. The Government of India did not repudiate the agreement but allowed Ceylon to enjoy the preference in our market.

It is difficult to understand the propriety of allowing Ceylon to continue to draw the benefits under the agreement and agree to allow the suspension of benefits we are entitled to receive under the Agreement till such time as the Government of India may come to final conclusion on some Agreement.

The attitude so far taken by His Majesty's Government and the Government of India with respect to Ceylon is felt to be nothing short of scandal.

What is the explanation of the Government of India and what are the conclusions of the committee? Instead of forthwith denouncing the attitude taken by Ceylon and debarring her from the advantages given to her under the scheme, they coolly state they are entertaining some fresh proposals from Ceylon. That is to say, that they are considering how far they could accommodate Ceylon in the matter of Ceylon copra at the expense of purely Indian interests, in return for some benefits. We are not told what those benefits are, in the meantime allowing Ceylon to enjoy the preference in the Indian market without paying for it by giving the corresponding preferences.

#### VALUE TO GREAT BRITAIN

The value of the scheme to the United Kingdom :—The official report estimates the advantages secured by the United Kingdom as worth now about Rs. 5 and half crores.

I wish to note that for the following commodities of the imports preference has been found to have been definitely valuable to the United Kingdom.

Asbestos manufactures, boots and shoes, brushes, buttons of metal, chemicals, etc., cordage and rope, cork manufactures, cutlery, drugs and medicines, earthenware and porcelain, instruments and apparatus, hardware, furniture and cabinet ware drugs etc., containing spirit, machinery and millwork, aluminium wrought, brass, bronze and similar alloys, wrought, oils, oil and floor cloth, copper wrought, German silver and nickel, lead wrought, zinc wrought, paints and solutions, packing, rubber manufactures, smokers' requisities, toilet requisites, stationery, haberdashery and millinery, toys and requisites for games etc., cycles, woollen manufactures.

In the following preference showed only some value :

Leather, provisions, glue, cartridge cases, carriage and carts.

On motor cars and omnibuses the results are largely affected by exchange values.

No appreciable value due to preference is found in the import of natural essential oils, ale and beer, building materials and apparel.

In the following imports preference does not appear to have been of any value to the United Kingdom fire-arms, paper and pasteboard etc., umbrellas and umbrella fittings.

Taking this whole range of imports on which preferences are given to the United Kingdom and the results obtained in favour of that country practically on the whole range, it cannot be gainsaid substantial benefits were gained by the United Kingdom.

#### CONCLUSION

It is not possible for me, on the results obtained during the last two years, to come to any other conclusions than that the scheme so far as India's interests in general and Indian interests in particular are concerned, has not proved to be a success. India carried its part of the obligations faithfully. But it is difficult to maintain that the High Contracting Party has not over-looked our subordinate position and has been carrying its duties under the scheme as scrupulously as we expect her to carry. Assuming that the obligations will be carried scrupulously hereafter, it is difficult even then to maintain that the scheme can be worked out to our great advantage. I do not grudge if the United Kingdom is benefited more than we are. But are we benefited? There can be no doubt if we isolate the effect of preferences on our exports in that particular market, although the expectations held regarding some of our principal agricultural products have not been realised, there has been of some benefit as on our exports of woollen carpets and rugs. At the time of ratifying the Agreement, Mr. Sadiq Hassan, who is interested in this trade observed that, although his own trade would be benefited, he must oppose the Agreement on the ground it is not beneficial to the country as a whole. Taking the entire trade into consideration, our apprehensions in the minority Report were justified by the results before us. We have neither increased our production nor expanded our trade or preference, but we have purchased a quarrel with some of our good customers, when we gave preferences to the United Kingdom on every conceivable article of import from a metal button to a Rolls Royce. Even if foreign countries cannot be said to have a reasonable complaint on the preferences, we have given to the United Kingdom to which country we are subordinated, yet to the extent to which foreign countries were displaced by the United Kingdom in their imports into this country to that extent their power to purchase our exports is reduced. Our agriculturists for whose benefit this scheme was professed to be valuable are now no better off. I am unable to say that the continuance of the scheme is beneficial to

us. I realise the consequences that are sure to follow by putting an end to the scheme. We are economically inferior or politically subordinate to the United Kingdom. We are not in a position to assert ourselves like the self-governing parts of the Empire. Our political future is now being shaped by the British people and their Government. It is not disguised by those who have been advocating the scheme that we cannot afford to incur the displeasure of the British nation now. But in coming to these conclusions I have not permitted myself to be influenced by political considerations.

Assuming for the purpose of argument, the United Kingdom is the only important market for us, increased dependence upon the market of the country to which this country is subordinate and the gradual alienation of the markets of the world which have been good to us, is not conducive to our economic prosperity. I feel I should not be a consenting party to a scheme economically so disastrous to us, whatever be the political consequences. It is more heroic to be killed if need be than commit suicide.

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## The Ottawa Agreement in Working

### Effect of Preferences on Indo-British Trade

A detailed and masterly examination, aided by facts and figures, is made in the case of each of the articles of export from India on which she has received preference either in the United Kingdom or in the British colonies in the report on the working of the scheme of preferences resulting from the Ottawa Agreement between the Government of India and his Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom up to the end of the fiscal year 1933-34. The report, which has been compiled by Dr. Meek, director general of commercial intelligence and statistics, is in fulfilment of the promise given by the Government of India at the time of the debates in the Legislature on the Ottawa Agreement, when it was stated by the Government that it would be submitted to committees of the Assembly and of the Council of States. Altogether the report consists of four chapters and a number of appendices. The first chapter examines the working of the preferences granted on Indian exports when imported into the United Kingdom, correspondingly the second chapter examines the working of the preferences which India has granted on imports into India from the United Kingdom and certain British colonies. The effect of the preferences granted by India on the market prices of imported articles which receive preferential treatment is discussed in the third chapter while the fourth relates to the representations received from Indian industries which are opposed to certain preferences given by India. Dr. Meek makes it clear at the outset that the opinions and conclusions contained in the report are not to be regarded as an expression of the final views of the Govt. of India on any particular point.

#### WHEAT

Dealing first with exports, Dr. Meek refers to wheat and contends that at present the preference on this commodity of two shillings a quarter is of little value to India owing to her special wheat position. In the first place with a normal crop, India, at present prices, can probably just meet her consumption. Secondly, as a result of the wheat import duty and the absence of any large exportable surplus, wheat prices in India have been much above world parity. Lastly, the supply position in the year 1933 precluded the possibility of a considerable demand from the importing countries including United Kingdom. The 1933 crop in some of the exporting countries, chiefly North America, was a poor one, but the importing countries, including the United Kingdom, had reaped the best crops attained in the Post-war period. Consequently, the demand from these countries was less strong. Joined to the heavy accumulated stocks from the preceding years and the policy of national self-sufficiency followed by most European countries these bumper crops in the importing countries meant a fairly weak demand in the world in general. Good maize, rye and potato-crops in Europe weakened the markets still further. As result of all these factors there was a smaller demand in

the importing countries and consequently world prices remained low and India continued entirely out of parity with, of course, no exports of any significance. This preference is of no value to India at present and in the very near future its value is extremely problematic. The total exports from India in 1933-34 is calculated at two thousand tons, almost the same as in the preceding year. The exports have been quite negligible in recent years and have almost reached the vanishing point in the last two years. There were no exports to the United Kingdom either in 1933-34 or in the previous year. Exports to the U. K. in 1931-32 amounted to nearly 17 thousand tons. Exports to Ceylon were quite negligible amounting to 229 tons in 1933-34 as against 166 and 145 tons in the preceding years. Thus exports from India were of no importance in the last two years and the preference has not had any significance. The price of wheat in Karachi was for many months considerably higher than the price of Manitoba in London. With such a price position no exports could be possible.

#### RICE

The rice exports from British India, which are chiefly from Burma, showed an increase in so far as the United Kingdom was concerned but this increase was not sufficiently large to balance the loss of markets elsewhere. India proper is, on balance, a rice importing country. The statistical position of Burma rice was fair during 1933-34. The price of Indian rice was competitive, but the sales to the United Kingdom were affected adversely by the superior packing and polish of the competing Spanish and American produce. One important factor militating against the greater increase of imports of rice into the United Kingdom was the present inability of India and Burma to provide, in a sufficiently increasing measure, the quality of rice required by the consumers in the U. K. As Burma rice was inferior to foreign rice in respect of flavour and the easier cooking properties, as well as the finish and polish, its consumption suffered. The total exports of rice (including broken cleaned rice) to all countries during 1933-34 amounted to 1,649 thousand tons in the preceding year, thus recording a decline of 100 thousand tons. Exports to U. K. in 1933-34 were nearly 90 thousand tons in the preceding year and 30 thousand tons in 1931-32. Imports of rice during 1933 amounted to 1,037 thousand cwts. as compared with 1,592 thousand cwts. in 1931. The important point is that actual imports from India were large inspite of the reduced total consumption ; a satisfactory position proving the value of the preference.

#### OIL SEEDS

The view that preference in the case of groundnut oil, linseed oil, castor oil and rape oil would lead to a definite expansion of the total volume of Indian trade, since the market for these commodities which might be captured by India in the U. K. alone is greater than the total volume of Indian exports of the same products to all countries, was expressed by the majority of the special committee appointed by the Legislative Assembly to consider the question of preference. Both the total trade as well as trade with U. K. has shown substantial increase in the last two years since preference came into operation.

The total exports of all vegetable oils from India amounted to 2,915 thousand gallons in 1933-34 while in the previous year the figure was 2,444 thousand gallons. The total exports to countries granting preference were 1,795 thousand gallons in 1933-34 as compared with 1,616 thousand gallons in 1932-33. The exports to the United Kingdom in 1933-34 amounted to 753 thousand gallons as compared with 767 thousand gallons in 1932-33 and 635 thousand gallons in 1931-32. Thus exports seem to have declined slightly in 1933-34 as compared with the preceding year ; but the exports of 1932-33 and the first preference of ten per cent. came into force in March 1932. If the figures of 1931, 1932 and 1933 however are compared it will be found that there has been a consistent increase in the trade since the preference came into being. There were no exports of linseed oil from India to the U. K. and only a very small quantity is sent to Mauritius. India's chief markets therefore lie outside the countries granting preference. The total exports during 1933-34 amount to 67 thousand gallons as compared with 44 thousand gallons in the preceding year and 38 thousand gallons in 1931-32.

Exports of groundnut oil during 1933-34 amount to 716 thousand gallons as compared with 917 thousand gallons in the previous year. The imports of groundnut oil (unrefined) into the U. K. amounted to four thousand tons in 1933 as compared with 37 thousand tons in the previous year. The share of India in the



U. K. market in 1931 was 0.63 thousand gallons or 5 per cent. in 1932 it rose to 1.5 thousand gallons or over 40 per cent. In 1933 India was responsible for 95 per cent. of the total imports into the U.P., her share amounting to 38 thousand tons. The share of other countries had dwindled to 5 per cent. This shows very definitely that the preference has enabled India to capture this market and all her competitors.

Total exports of rapeseed oil for 1933-34 amounted to 263 thousand gallons whereas in the previous year the exports were 226 thousand gallons.

Preference has been granted to Indian linseed in the U. K. and Fiji. India's exports to the U. K. amounted to 14,000 tons only in 1931-32 and 1932-33. In 1933-34 they reached the enormously increased figure of 175 thousand tons. India's exports both to the U. K. and to other countries increased enormously during 1933-34 as compared with the preceding two years and further the increase in the case of the exports to the U. K. was of the much larger dimensions both actually and as a percentage than in the case of other countries. The preference on linseed helped Indian linseed to oust the Argentine linseed from the U. K. market more effectively and to that extent was definitely advantageous. Argentina is a much larger supplier of linseed to the world markets than India. But even so, while the preference continues the United Kingdom market will to a very large extent remain a sheltered market for Indian linseed. The 1933-34 Argentine crop has also been a comparative failure, the products amounting to only 1.3 million tons, which is much the same as the output in 1932-33. In view of the second failure together with the preference, the position of Indian linseed should be strong during the year 1934-35 and these two factors acting in the same direction will encourage the exports of Indian linseed. It may be stated, observes the report, quite definitely that the ten per cent. preference on linseed has certainly benefited India during the year 1933-34.

#### TEA AND COFFEE

With regard to coffee, the report contends that although the preference on it did not help India to increase her share in the market, nevertheless it enabled her to maintain her share which without preference would most assuredly have receded to a much lower level. The total imports of coffee into U. K. showed a considerable decline in the last four years. If the quality of Indian coffee were improved and suitable measures were taken by advertising to push Indian coffee in the U. K. market it seems highly probable that the exports to that country would show a profitable increase.

The preference has in no way affected the distribution of the Indian trade in tea in the United Kingdom. The total imports of tea during 1933 amounted to a little under 505 million lbs. as compared with 556 million lbs. in 1932. This fall was the result of the Export Restriction Scheme. India's share in 1933 was 279 million lbs. as compared with 312 million lbs. in the preceding year. The percentage share which India enjoyed remained almost the same in the two years, being a little over 55 per cent. The prices of tea in India recorded an enormous increase from the beginning of new season 1933 as compared with the previous season. The tea season generally commences in June. A similar increase was noticeable in London also but prices did not rise to the same extent as in India. This meant in other words that India could sell in U. K. a proportionately equal amount of tea at better prices. This result must have been made possible to a certain extent, by the preference she received from the U. K.

#### COTTON MANUFACTURES

The total exports of cotton yarn during 1933-34 amounted to 16 million lbs. as compared with 15 million lbs. in the preceding year. Exports to the U. K. increased from 198 thousand lbs. in 1932-33 to 440 thousands lbs. in 1933-34 and those to Ceylon from 136 thousand lbs. to 172 thousand lbs. Thus, there has been an increase of exports to countries granting preference.

The preference granted to cotton manufactures in colonies was of little importance. Ceylon which is one of the most important customers accounting for 38 per cent. of the total trade to all Empire countries granted India no preference. The value of export from India to the Empire countries excluding the U. K. amounted to nearly 119 lakhs. Out of this the value of trade, with the colonies which granted preference, was only a little over Rs. 5½ lakhs or less than five per cent. Preference on hides helped India to increase her trade in the U. K. at the cost of her foreign competitors, whose share is now only ten per cent.



## JUTE

In respect of exports of jute sacks and bags, gunny cloth, to the United Kingdom, India has been holding her own in the U. K. market. The preference has not helped her to increase her trade but probably without it the trade might not have been maintained at the existing level. The United Kingdom takes, on an average, only eight per cent. of India's total exports of jute but the value of the trade is high. Imports during 1933 amounted to 304 thousand cwts. as compared with 368 thousand cwts. in 1932 and 395 thousand cwts. in 1931. Thus, imports have been decreasing consistently in the last few years. India's share was 35 thousand cwts. or 97.3 per cent, in 1932. With the decline in the total trade imports from India dropped to 298 thousand cwts, but the percentage share increased by nearly one per cent. India has captured the market in the last two years, imports to the U. K. from other countries being very small in dimensions. In the three years, 1929-31 imports of jute piecegoods into England from foreign countries were of considerable magnitude accounting in 1931 for 21.5 per cent. of the total imports. Preference has thus reduced competition from other countries and to that extent enabled India to retain her market in the U. K. and improve her percentage share of that market.

Exports of paraffin wax to the U. K. have increased to some extent though they have not reached the level of earlier years. This is probably due to the lower production of this item in the last three years. There is no evidence that the preference on spices has had much effect on India's trade in this item.

## TEAK AND TOBACCO

Preference on teak and other hard woods, it is pointed out in the report, will be of value to India, if not in extending her market greatly, at least in maintaining it. Preference has been granted in the U. K. on all sorts of hardwoods from India. The exports to all countries in 1933-34 of other hardwoods were a little over 600 cubic tons in a total of 27,000 cubic tons or slightly over 2 per cent. As far as India is concerned the preference amounts to a preference mainly on teak. Under this item, India supplies a very large proportion of imports into the U. K.

Preference of twenty per cent. on woollen carpets and rugs has been granted in the U. K. and ten per cent. in Ceylon and the Federated Malaya States.

Preference on rice meal and dust has been of some assistance to India in maintaining her relative position as a supplier to the U. K. market.

Immense value of the preference on tobacco is emphasised in the report which observes that but for the preference extended in U. K. India would have been unable to retain what market she has there.

In the case of castor seeds, it may be safely said, the report says, that the preference has enabled her to capture the U. K. market from her competitors and has been of very definite advantage to her.

In groundnut, India has gained as much as Empire competitors in the U. K. market in 1933 and it is difficult to explain, remarks the report, why India could not increase her share to the same extent as the other Empire countries whose share went up from 28 thousand tons or 29 per cent. to nearly 60 thousand tons or 45 per cent. The preference has been of advantage to India but other Empire countries have so far benefited to a greater extent than India from the preference.

India's trade in lead with the United Kingdom increased both absolutely and relatively and this change, the report declares, must be due in a great measure to the preference which has been granted on the exports of lead to the U. K. and of pig lead to Ceylon.

## LAC

There is no preference on lac which is allowed free entry in the U. K., but the synthetic substitutes for lac are subject to duty. Preference is thus granted to natural lac as against the competing substitutes. The export from India to U. K., have more than trebled in quantity in 1933-34 while the percentage share is nearly double of what it was. This great increase must, in a large measure, be accredited to the preference which Indian natural lac received over the synthetic substitutes.

There was no preference on myrobalans, broken rice and mica. In hemp, India has been able to increase her share in the U. K. market slightly. Preference has been of very little value to India so far as trade in iron and steel is concerned.

India has granted a ten per cent. preference on fishmaws and sharkfins in British Malaya (excluding the Straits Settlements) and her trade in these articles has remained fairly steady for the last few years, but her exports to the Federated and Unfederated Malaya States were either insignificant or nil during this period.

#### RAW COTTON

There has been a considerable increase in the exports of raw cotton from India to the U. K., the figure for 1933-34 being the highest in the last seven years. The U. K. purchases of raw cotton from India increased very considerably in 1933-34 amounting to 61 thousand tons.

The action taken to follow up the undertakings given by his Majesty's Government as regards encouraging the increase of Indian cotton by the Lancashire industry is described in the report in detail. India's share in the total imports of raw cotton into the U. K. was 50 thousand tons in the three years 1929-1931. The parity in 1933-34 has been improving in favour of Indian cotton as against the American and the general increased purchases of Indian cotton by overseas markets are due to large extent to the immediate factor, which of course, affects all markets including U. K.

Imports of iron and steel into the U. K. were admitted free in accordance with an agreement arrived at between the Indian Delegation to Ottawa Conference and United Kingdom. The total exports of pig iron in 1933-34 amounted to 377 thousand tons as compared with 218 thousand tons in the preceding year. The share of U. K. in 1933-34 amounted to 93 thousand tons as compared with 76 thousand tons in the preceding year and 69 thousand tons in 1931-32.

The report examines the course of the Indo-British trade during the past five years and concludes that although after the Ottawa Trade Agreement the U. K. has improved her position in the Indian market, there is still a good deal of leeway for her to make up. On the other hand, she proved to be an increasingly important market for Indian goods.

#### IMPORTS

Attempt is made in the report to illustrate the effect of the preferences given in the Ottawa Trade Agreement on the import trade of British India. Taking first the preferences granted to the U. K. it is said that cotton piecegoods and iron and steel made up 25 per cent. of total value of the imports from the U. K. in 1933-34. The report emphasises the point that any advantages gained by the United Kingdom as a result of the preferential duties were minimised to some extent by intensive competition from countries notably from Japan, with depreciated currencies. In many cases this competition proved so serious to local industries that action had to be taken by the introduction of alternative minimum specific duties to restore as far as possible the competitive price position of the year 1931 in respect of such articles, retaining at the same time whenever the margin of preferences already granted to the U. K.

Trade in arms and ammunition has been falling progressively in recent years, mainly as a result of the reduced purchasing power.

The total imports of British India of building and engineering materials other than iron steel or wood amounted to 42 lakhs as compared with 50 lakhs in 1932-33

#### BRITAIN'S SHARE INCREASES

Under the Ottawa Trade Agreement some of the chemicals and chemical preparations were subject to preferential duties which came into force on April 1, 1933. The United Kingdom increased her share in the imports of sodium carbonate and caustic soda.

The preference granted to U. K. on drugs and medicines has been of value to the United Kingdom.

The United Kingdom increased her share in the imports of earthenware and porcelain inspite of the exceptionally severe competition from Japan.

Machinery and millwork are important items in India's import trade with the U. K. Some articles recorded under this head enjoy preferences in India, if they are of the U. K. origin.

The United Kingdom has a large percentage of share in the imports of aluminium wrought, brass, bronze and similar alloys, wrought.

The total imports of lubricating oils, other than batching oils into India during 1933-34 showed an increase from 8.5 million gallons to 10.8 million gallons in

quantity although, expressed in value, the trade declined from Rs. 110 lakhs to Rs. 102 lakhs.

Imports of paper manufacture into India rose from 25,000 cwts. to 31,000 cwts. of which the U. K. supplied 12,000 cwts. or 39 per cent. as compared with 7,000 tons or 28 per cent. in 1932-33.

While the steady decline in the total value of the imports of rubber manufactures continued in the year 1933-34 the imports from the U. K. rose sharply from Rs. 69 lakhs in 1931-32 to Rs. 80 lakhs in 1932-33 and further to Rs. 116 lakhs 1933-34. Japan also sent consignments worth Rs. 4 lakhs in 1933-34 as against Rs. 3 and three-fourth lakhs in 1932-33.

The improvement in U. K.'s share of imports of woollen manufactures is probably the result of the ten per cent. preference enjoyed by her.

In toilet requisites, U. K. was able to recover some of her trade probably chiefly as a result of the ten per cent preference, her contribution to the total trade having increased from Rs. 20 and three-fourth lakhs or 36 per cent. in 1932-33 to Rs. 22 lakhs or 39 per cent. in 1933-34. The chief competitor in this line is the United States, while France, Germany and Japan have a relatively small share, about 8 per cent. each in this trade.

Referring to the prices of imports in India, the report makes clear that a reduction in prices of preferential and non-preferential goods in India could not be wholly due to a great fall in the general price level especially in countries in the sterling group.

The chief reasons why the consumer has not been adversely affected by the new preferential duties are adduced in the report, which observes that prices in most cases of imports from the U. K. have shown considerable decreases. No doubt a part of this may have been due to a general falling tendency in prices of similar articles, but it cannot be denied that apart from this decrease was certainly due to the reduction in the duty in favour of the U. K. and the effect on international trade to such a degree that whatever trade remains is subject to severe competition.

The share in the imports of hardware, ironmongery and tools of all sorts not otherwise specified, amounts to Rs. 97,55,822, or 34 per cent. as against Rs. 1,90,27,562 or 66 per cent. from foreign countries. The preference has in no way adversely affected the consumers in this particular item inasmuch as prices have been reduced in many cases both by the United Kingdom and by some of the foreign competitors.

Imports from U. K. of electrical instruments, apparatus and appliances, namely, (a) electrical control gear etc. (b) all other sorts, etc., amounted to Rs. 1,30,52,597 or 57 per cent. and those from foreign countries Rs. 1,00,28,764 or 43 per cent.

The United Kingdom and Japan were the chief competitors in India's import trade in earthenware, China and procelain while in the matter of India's import of metals and manufactures thereof, namely, (a) aluminium-circles sheets and other manufactures, not otherwise specified, there has been a fall in the case of Canadian supplies due to a decrease in landed cost following the depreciation of the exchange.

As regards German silver, including nickel silver, the fall in the case of British manufactures is great owing to keep price-cutting carried on by the Imperial Chemical Industries.

There is very keen competition in toys, games, playing cards etc. says the report, not only among the various imported makes but also with the growing Indian manufactures. The result of this competition combined with the preference has been an all-round fall in the prices of imports from all sources. It is reported from Bombay that imports of American, German and French goods have practically died out owing to the preferences.

Imports of betelnuts are mostly from the Straits Settlements and Ceylon.

The only industry in respect of which it has been claimed that the Ottawa preferences have been prejudicial to Indian interests in the aluminium utensil manufacturing industry. It is contended by some that the process of ruin of these industry is being assisted by the preference, but the report quotes the opinion of the director-general of commercial intelligence and statistics and of the director of industries, Bombay, that the slump in the industry is due to (a) general trade depression (b) competition of brass utensils arising from the cheapness of the yellow metal and (c) competition amongst the aluminium producers themselves.

# The Associated Chambers of Commerce

## OPENING DAY—CALCUTTA—17th. DECEMBER 1934

The annual meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce was opened at Calcutta on the 17th. December 1934 by His Excellency the Viceroy.

There was a large and distinguished gathering including the Governor of Bengal, the Mayor of Calcutta, Sir John Woodhead, Mr. R. N. Reid, Sir K. Nazimuddin, Nawab K. G. M. Farouqui, Sir B. P. Singh Roy, Khan Bahadur Azizul Haque and Mr. E. N. Blandy, Chief Secretary.

### President's Address

*Mr. S. D. Gladstone*, presiding, welcomed Their Excellencies the Viceroy and the Bengal Governor and said that at the last meeting, he called attention to the great improvement in the political situation which had occurred during the Viceroy's term of office. The position to-day in India was even better. Regarding the "outstanding event of the year" he referred to the J. P. C. Report and said that preliminary reports of the Chambers indicated not only approval but cordial approval of the Report as a whole. He considered that they were able to express very substantial measure of satisfaction with the proposals, though they did not agree to a number of points of details of the recommendations. The greatest brake to the wheel of trade recovery was uncertainty and in India now for seven years they had been distracted on the question of Reforms. It was clearly urgent in the interests of the country that the further period of uncertainty be curtailed as much as possible. He assured Indians that in the solution of the problems which lay beyond the Reforms, they could confidently count upon their (commercial community's) friendship and co-operation.

Concluding, he paid a tribute to Sir George Schuster and Sir Joseph Bhore and welcomed Sir James Grigg and Chaudhury Zafrulla Khan. He also referred to the heavy weight of taxation and asked 'with real signs of improving made and with Sir James at the head of the Finance Department, may we not confidently look for some lightening of the burden that we have patiently borne for so long?'

### H. E. The Viceroy's Address.

The following is the text of H. E. the Viceroy's speech :—

Mr. President, Your Excellency, and Gentlemen,

I thank you most cordially for the warmth of the welcome you have extended to me this morning. May I say that for my part, I am delighted to have this opportunity of meeting once again the members of the Associated Chambers? For I think I can claim that, realising as I do, the close connection between the contentment of a country and the prosperity of her trade and commerce, I have spared no pains during the years that I have held my high office to interest myself in every possible way in all matters connected with commerce and finance. I, therefore, look forward each year, during my visit to Calcutta, to gaining first hand information from you, gentlemen, on the many aspects of the commercial situation, and I hope that as a result, you will credit me with pressing forward, to the best of my ability, the examination of any measures which I have considered to be for the benefit of the general commercial welfare. At all events, you may be sure that these matters are constantly in my mind, for I know fully that the well-being of a large proportion of the population of this great country is dependent, to no small extent, upon the prosperity of her trade.

Last year, I gave you a comprehensive account of the outlook as I saw it then with regard to such matters as affect the business community in India. This year, I propose to be more brief, because my many preoccupations of the past few weeks with regard to which I shall have more to say upon another occasion during my stay in Calcutta, have occupied my mind so fully that I have had but little time in which to prepare my speech to-day and, therefore, while I propose to say little this morning, with reference to the Joint Select Committee's Report, after listening



to your remarks, I cannot refrain from expressing the profound hope that your anticipation as to the general verdict that may be given to its proposal by your important Association will prove entirely correct.

#### TRADE RELATIONS

The year which has just passed has been less remarkable than its predecessor in regard to India's trade relations with other countries. Though the Indo-Japanese Trade Convention and the Protocol were not formally signed until May, they have been in actual operation, since agreement on essentials was reached by the two delegations in the month of January. It may yet be too early to offer a final opinion but my Government believe that the Agreement has achieved its objects namely, the restoration of more normal conditions in the mutual trade of India and Japan and the re-establishment of friendly relations between the two countries. It will be of interest to this Association to know that the Government of Italy have expressed a desire to send a trade delegation to India with a view to discussing with my Government the problems of Indo-Italian trade. A matter which has been causing some concern is the German foreign exchange position. The situation is obscure and it is not yet apparent to what extent India's export trade is likely to be affected by the new German regulations, which recently came into force. I can, however, give the fullest assurance that the situation is receiving our closest attention.

In pursuance of the policy of international co-operation, my Government have ratified the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea and the International Convention respecting load lines, which were concluded in 1929 and 1930 respectively. The Conventions will come into force in British India on January 1, 1935. On the same date the Simla Rules, which modify certain provisions of the Safety of Life at Sea Convention, in so far as they apply to ships carrying large numbers of unberthed passengers or pilgrims, will also come into force. The Safety of Life at Sea Convention prescribes uniform standards for adoption by all contracting Governments as regards the construction of Life-saving appliances, radio equipment and other matters affecting the safety of life at sea, while the Load Line Convention similarly prescribes uniform principles and rules with regard to the limits to which ships on international voyages may be loaded. The standard laid down in these conventions constitute a marked advance on those obtaining at present. It is now over 18 months since the Tea Restriction Scheme was put into operation and it is needless for me to point to the material benefits which have accrued to the Indian tea industry from the scheme. I would, however, like to take this opportunity of congratulating those responsible on the success with which the scheme has been administered in India. It is most gratifying to note that the necessity for interference with the operations of the Licensing Committee has been almost non-existent. It was to a great extent the example of the Tea Restriction Scheme which influenced my Government to lend its support to the International Agreement for the control of the production and export of rubber, and though the circumstances of the two industries are not identical, it is our earnest hope that the latter scheme of international co-operation will be as successful as its forerunner and result in a much-needed measure of prosperity to the rubber industry in India and Burma.

#### MERCANTILE MARINE

In my last address to your Association, I referred to the success achieved, referred by the Indian Mercantile Marine Training Ship "Dufferin" in turning out young officers for the Indian Mercantile Marine. Encouraged by this success we decided to extend the scope of the training given on board which has hitherto been directed towards the reduction of Mercantile Marine Officers on the Executive side only and from the beginning of next year the "Dufferin" will have among her cadets a number of Engineer Cadets who after three years' preliminary training on the ship, followed by practical training at workshops in India, will, in due course, be qualified to take up appointments as Engineer Officers in the Indian Mercantile Marine. We have received assurances from engineering firms and shipping companies in India regarding the workshops training and subsequent employment of the engineer cadets trained on the "Dufferin" and I take this opportunity to express my thanks to them for their co-operation in this regard.

#### CIVIL AVIATION

Striking evidence of the value that business and other interests in India attach to the trunk telephone system is furnished by the fact that in spite of the economic



depression of recent years, there has been a very substantial increase in the traffic dealt with by that system. My Government propose steadily to pursue their policy of development of a trunk net-work between all important centres in this country. In the field of Civil Aviation, you are aware that we have recently undertaken a notable programme for the development of ground organisation. The staff of the Aviation Department is devoting all its energies towards securing the rapid completion of the more urgent part of the scheme and can look forward confidently to an early and marked improvement in the facilities afforded along India's main air routes. The most important developments since I last addressed you have been the inauguration by the Indian National Airways early this month of an air mail service between Karachi and Lahore and the duplication of the Indian National Airway Service between Calcutta and Rangoon. Although the saving in time which the first of these services provides is not inconsiderable, the experience it is hoped to gain during the initial stages of the operation and the development of night landing facilities along the route should produce further acceleration. The second development I have mentioned provides, in conjunction with the Indian Trans-Continental Airways' existing service, three services weekly between Calcutta and Rangoon, a frequency equal to that of the existing surface transport services. The saving of two days in transit between Calcutta and Rangoon should prove of great value to the trade of the two cities. As you are doubtless aware from the statements which have recently appeared in the press, a still more striking development is in immediate prospect, namely, the duplication of the Air Mail Service between Croydon and Calcutta. Simultaneously with these developments, a step in the cheapening of the air mail has been taken in the reduction in air mail charge by the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department on letters from India and by the British Post Office on letters to India. I hope that these reductions will be only a prelude to further reductions which will enable the public and more especially that part of it which you represent to avail itself more freely of the advantages of the rapid interchange of business communications to which the commercial community rightly attaches such great importance.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

I referred last year to the important Road-Rail Conference held in April, 1935, and the subsequent discussion between the Government of India and the Local Governments. A further step forward will be taken next month when a Transport Advisory Council will meet for the first time. This will consist of the members of my Government concerned, sitting with Provincial Ministers and their advisers. Its discussion will cover a wide range and will, I hope, crystallise the policy in some matters and indicate others which can be further investigated with advantage. It is hoped that the Council will have yearly meetings and that it will provide close and regular contact between the Centre and the Provinces, for it must not be supposed that the problems with which it will be faced are capable of easy solution. I am glad to have this opportunity of expressing my pleasure at the readiness which all local Governments have shown in co-operating with us in the search for a progressive policy of road and rail development, which is so badly needed by a country in which distances are as great as they are in India and I trust that even at its first meeting, the Transport Advisory council will be able to put forward schemes of development which will be of immediate value and also to a sound basis for future advance. Much has been said on the question of bringing all matters concerning communications into one portfolio both at the Centre and in the Provinces. The principal difficulty has hitherto been the constitutional division of subjects between the Reserved and Transferred sides, but we are now assured that when that obstacle disappears, local Governments will consider the possibility of making such adjustment as is compatible with a proper distribution of work at the centre. We have found certain practical difficulties which are now engaging our attention. At the last Budget Session, a resolution was adopted by both Chambers of the Indian Legislature extending, without limit of time, the duration of the Central Road Account and at the same time expanding its scope to include the development of rural and marketing facilities. The portion of this account placed at the discretionary disposal of the Government of India was increased from 10 to 15 per cent. This reserve has been and is being utilised to make grants for many roads and bridges which are important links in our chain of road communications and which, without assistance from the Reserve, would, in all probability, not have been constructed for many years to come. We have also been able to defray the

cost of a comprehensive survey of road development in Sind and a similar survey of certain of the Eastern States and parts of Orissa has recently been undertaken. This is hardly the time or place for me to enlarge on the engineering problems involved in the economical construction and maintenance of roads in India. I will say no more about them than that experts all agree that few countries in the world are faced with such difficulties as those that arise in India from the combination of fast motor traffic with heavy unsprung bullock carts with their narrow iron tyres. The problems, naturally, vary in different parts of India, but they have much in common and if the Indian Roads Congress, which was inaugurated a few days before I left Delhi takes permanent form, it should be able to render material help in forwarding their solution.

### ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

You will, no doubt, expect from me some reference to the existing economic position and some attempt to project myself into the future. The first and most outstanding point is that the credit of India stands higher than it has done for 20 years. For the first time since 1896, the Government of India have issued a loan on a three per cent basis and this now stands at over par. It is true that this was a comparatively short term issue, but the medium and long-dated loans are all at prices which show a yield to redemption of something not very much above 3 per cent. There are, of course, a number of causes for this improvement of credit, most of them extremely satisfactory and one of them less so. The main causes, no doubt, are the improvement in the political condition of India and the sound financial policy pursued by my Government during the last three or four years. On the other hand, these factors, by themselves, could not have raised the prices of our securities to their present level, but for the low rates prevailing in London and these are due to the abundance of money seeking a home in London, partly because of the comparatively small demand for trade accommodation in the world at large and partly because of the unsettled political and monetary conditions in so many quarters. That the demand for money for financing international trade is not as heavy as we should like to see them is not surprising, for apart from the disturbed political conditions in all parts of the world, restraints are everywhere being placed upon trade in the shape of tariffs, quotas, prohibitions and exchange restrictions, but if the high level of Government loans is, in part, a reflection of the limited demand for trade loans, it must not be assumed that India is still in the trough of depression. It is quite true that recovery is not as rapid as we might wish, but there are definite signs that it is in progress. The weekly figures of railway earnings show that railway traffic has been on a considerably higher level during the current year than it was in the corresponding period of last year. The figures of external trade, both imports and exports, are a distinct improvement on those of last year. The general level of industrial production appears to be higher than it was in 1933. For the nine months up to September, 1934, the indigenous production of mill-made cotton piece-goods showed an increase of 156 million yards over that of the corresponding period of 1933 and no doubt this increase would have been much greater but for the strike in Bombay during April and May. Iron and steel manufactures show a very considerable increase and improvement is noticeable also in cement, kerosene, petrol and coal.

These are encouraging signs and when we add to these the fact that in a number of primary commodities there has been a distinct recovery from the disastrously low level of prices to which the cultivator had been subjected, I think it can be said with confidence that India had passed the lowest point of the economic crisis and that some sort of upward movement is in evidence. The important thing for us is how far will this upward movement go. There are a number of people who think that India can make herself independent, economically, of the rest of the world. I do not take that view. I believe that there are very definite limits to India's power of recovery, independently of that of the rest of the world. We are, therefore, vitally interested in the recovery of the rest of the world. For the world at large, I doubt, if recovery will go very far until two changes have occurred, the first the restoration of some measure of political stability and confidence and the second the removal of a large number of the restraints which now exist upon the exchange of commodities and services. To take the second point first, it is clear to me that the prosperity of India must, for many years to come, depend upon her ability to increase her sales abroad of the raw materials and foodstuffs which she so abundantly produces. It is true that this can to some extent be done by

promoting the efficiency of her agriculture and marketing (including transport) but it depends much more upon the extent to which other nations of the world are willing and able to accept India's products and this, in its turn, depends to a very considerable extent on India's willingness to accept their goods in return. The acceptance of imports from other countries is not necessarily an evil. It may very well mean an increasing capacity on the part of other countries, to buy India's goods and if so the total volume of trade in both directions is increased and the standard of prosperity of the world at large is enhanced. As regards my first point, namely, political disturbance, I feel that the experience of the last two years should do much to prove that tranquillity and obedience to the law of the land are an economic asset of the first magnitude. Surely, it is no exaggeration to say that the upward movement to which I have already referred, is in no small measure due to the stable political conditions which this country had recently enjoyed. I confidently hope that such stability will continue. It will be my constant endeavour to see that it does and that a general determination to work the reforms which are now in process of being passed into law in England will result in a continued revival of trade, with increasing prosperity for the country which will then be in a better position to stand the financial strain, which the first stage of the introduction of provincial autonomy must impose.

There is one important development that the coming year has in store, viz., the institution of the Reserve Bank of India. The importance of this in the commercial and financial life of India can scarcely be overestimated. Indians of every community, as well as Europeans, should work for its success and it is not altogether an idle dream to hope that may come to occupy the position in the economic life of India that the Bank of England does in that of Great Britain and the Empire and the world generally. It is a source of great satisfaction to me, as I am sure it must be to all of you, to know that Sir Edward Benthall has agreed to serve as a Director of the Bank.

#### COMMERCIAL SAFEGUARDS

I have told you that, on this occasion I do not propose to touch on the general aspects of the scheme of constitutional reform but I will make a brief exception as regards commercial and other reforms of discrimination, since this is a question closely affecting that heritage of trade and industry built up in India by your predecessors and worthily and honourably maintained by yourselves. Trade relations are essentially a matter of confidence, trust and goodwill. Of that no one is in a better position to judge than yourselves. In my reading of the Committee's Report, this broad truth is fully appreciated. It is a principle which I am sure you would yourselves be the first to endorse. The committee have recognised that when we move from one system of government to another, when power passes to new hands, doubts may arise of the uses to which that power may be put. For that reason they have come to the conclusion that in matters of your trade, your industry and generally your commercial activities, the Constitution Act cannot be silent. You wish to know where you stand. So too do your friends in the Indian business community wish to know their own position. Therefore, I quote the Committee's own words. They recommend certain provisions in the constitution "for the double purpose of facilitating the transition from the old to the new conditions and of reassuring the sensitive opinion of both sides." It is in no partisan spirit that the Committee have approached this question. They have been charged with a responsibility to ensure fair terms to all interested parties and I read the recommendations in their report as actuated by that motive. You have not claimed and do not desire a privileged position. What you require is freedom to pursue your various enterprises in the normal conditions of commerce and industry without fear that you may be put out of action by restrictions directed against yourselves as a community. The Joint Committee have been concerned to secure that you should suffer under no unfair handicap and that full play should be given to your ability to contribute to the advancement of this country, by your powers of organisation, by your technical equipment and your control of all that modern science can add to our amenities. On the other hand, no obstruction is placed in the way of the development of expansion of the Indian industry in Indian hands in conditions in which they can, I hope, have no grievance against you and you have no grievance against them. My one conception of the future is of a vast field open for development in which the help you can give to the Indian business community will be not less welcome than the help which you will derive from them.

On your joint contributions, the country will rely for the attainment of its commercial and industrial advance and now, gentlemen, I leave you to discuss the many important items on your agenda.

I have spoken to-day of an upward movement in trade towards which the eyes not only of the commercial communities but also of the Government and the whole country are eagerly turned. I trust that no cloud will arise to dim that vision and that all classes and communities of this great country will join in promoting peaceful and constitutional progress during the fateful months that lie ahead of us.

## Discussion on Resolutions

### Sea Customs Act

The Conference next took up for consideration the business on the agenda,

Mr. G. L. Winterbotham (Bombay) moved the first resolution on the Sea Customs Act. It ran as follows :—

“In view of the large proportion of the landed cost of many imports now represented by Customs duty, it is urgently necessary that the basis of assessment in all British Indian ports and in all maritime Indian States shall be uniform. This Association, therefore, urges Government to take early action with a view to the administration of the Sea Customs Act in such a manner as to ensure that imported goods, subject to ad valorem assessment and assessed under Section 30, sub-section (a) shall be assessed on a wholesale cash price no greater than that at which they are first sold, or are capable of being sold, at the time and place of importation.”

The mover declared that the general attitude of the Bombay Chamber on this question of Section 30, was not prompted by the diversion of trade from Bombay. Uniformity of the basis of assessment was obviously desirable, as between different British Indian ports—the uniformity they wanted being only true and stable uniformity, the value being no greater than that at which goods were first sold or capable of being sold at the time and place of importation, on condition that they were then in without any subsequent addition.

Mr. V. H. D. Herbert (Bengal) seconded. Rai Bahadur P. Mukherjee (Punjab) and Mr. C. G. Wodehouse (Burma) supported. The resolution was carried unanimously.

### Duty on Foreign Coal

Mr. George Morgan (Bengal), moving the resolution that “This Association recommends to the Government of India that an increase in import duty on foreign coal entering India be introduced immediately” said that it was obvious that the Indian Coal Industry required assistance and help. He was against the possibility of further encroachment of foreign coal on the Indian market. In order to assist Indian coal to retain its trade in the Ceylon market, “further additional rebates could be given on rail freight.”

The resolution seconded by Mr. P. Mukherjee (Punjab) and supported by Mr. Bigg-Wither (Karachi) was carried.

### Tariff Rates Enquiry

Mr. G. H. Cooke (Bombay) moved a resolution requesting the Government to expedite the report of enquiry regarding the incidence of tariff rates. He said that the resolution ought to give prominence to one of the three suggestions which themselves formed a comprehensive scheme of planned economy adumbrated by Mr. F. E. James, in the course of the budget debate in the assembly last March.

The resolution which was seconded by Mr. T. Gavin Jones (Upper India) was carried.

### Tax on Sales of Liquor

Mr. O. Hearn (Bengal) moved a resolution regarding the excise tax on sales of liquor. The resolution ran as follows :—

“That this meeting urges on the Government of Bengal that the present Bengal Excise Tax on sales of liquor to the public outside Bengal, whereby Bengal traders are handicapped in competing for trade in other provinces, be suspended until such time as a similar tax be imposed by the Government of Bombay.



Mr. *J. L. Winterbotham* (Bombay) said that the matter concerned the particular Province and that excise being a provincial subject it should not be brought to this meeting.

Mr. *J. G. Rayn* (Upper India) said if that matter was insisted upon, they would oppose the resolution. It was withdrawn.

### Railway Tariffs

After the lunch interval, Mr. *T. Gavin Jones* (Upper India) moved a resolution on railway tariffs stating that goods tariffs appeared to them to contain very many inconsistencies which required careful consideration. The resolution stated:—

“That in the opinion of this Association there is immediate need for a close examination of railway goods tariffs so as to obtain closer co-ordination between the various railway systems having regard to the needs of India as a whole, primarily to ensure that the development of the internal trade and export trade of the country is more advantageously served than at present. It is considered essential, when the necessary data have been collected, that non-official representatives of trade and commerce should be associated with Government in a full enquiry into the question.”

Mr. *Jones* was sure that there could be no two opinions regarding the second part of the resolution. They would press the Government that data be collected as soon as possible and whenever the same was collected and the railway authorities were prepared to consider the principles whereon adjustment could be made, non-official representatives be appointed to conduct the enquiry.

Mr. *C. C. Miller* (Bengal), seconding, favoured co-ordinating various railway systems. Mr. *C. G. Wodehouse* (Burma) supported the resolution which was carried.

### Surcharge on Coal

Mr. *G. Morgan* (Bengal) moved a resolution on surcharge of coal freights where the word ‘immediate’ in the penultimate line of a resolution was deleted. He said that, although divergent opinions were expressed in various quarters, there was no question that everyone recognised that the position of the coal industry was very unsatisfactory.

Mr. *J. G. Ryan* (Upper India) seconded the resolution, to which Mr. *G. H. Cook* (Bombay) moved an amendment:—“The abolition of 15 per cent surcharge should not involve increase of railway charges in other directions.” As amended, the resolution was carried.

### Railway Board's Powers

Mr. *H. S. Bigg-Wither* (Karachi) moved a resolution on railway freight rates. The resolution ran as follows:—

“That this Association views with the gravest concern the policy of the Railway Board, who, by means of the powers conferred upon them by Government for the fixing of railway rates, are, in an attempt to secure the maximum of carriage by rail, diverting established trades from their natural channels. It contends that in entrusting the Railway Board with such wide powers, the Government of India relied on these powers being exercised only with the utmost discretion and with due regard to all interests affected; so that it was never contemplated that they would become the means of depriving firms and individuals of their natural livelihood, or threaten, if carried further, completely to isolate ports from their recognised sources of supply.”

He urged that the powers of the Railway Board should be restricted and that they should be exercised with due regard to all interests concerned.

Mr. *J. Reid Kay* (Bengal), seconding, said that railways succeeded in diverting a large amount of traffic from the sea route. They (Railways) were practically saying that there was no need for coastal shipping in India, as they could carry goods and that they would underquote anybody. Was this policy sound? he asked.

The resolution, supported by Mr. *P. Mukherjee* (Punjab), was carried.

### Surcharge on Income-tax

Mr. *A. Aikman* (Bengal Chamber) moved the eighth resolution on 25 per cent surcharge on income-tax and super-tax. He said that their motive in taking up the present attitude was that they felt that the first relief, granted from the present crushing burden of taxation should, in equity, be enjoyed by the whole body of



tax-payers. It was their belief that return to general prosperity would be stimulated by lightening the burden of taxation.

Mr. *G. L. Winterbotham* (Bombay Chamber) suggested that if they stood for the total abolition of 25 per cent surcharge on income-tax and super-tax, a very large sum was likely to be involved. They did not like to tie the hands of the Finance Member, giving relief to taxation, unless he was in a position to take off the whole 25 per cent. He wanted to make it clear that if they could not get the whole, they could get a part as the first step.

Mr. *Winterbotham* accordingly moved the following amendment: "This Association is of opinion that the abolition or, if it is not possible in one step, the reduction of 25 per cent etc."

The mover did not accept the amendment which was lost.

The original resolution was carried.

#### Business Losses

Mr. *J. Reid Kay* moved the resolution on carrying forward business losses etc. He said that the principle had been recognised as equitable by Sir George Schuster, but on the ground of finance, the Government had so far refrained from action. They should like to have an assurance from the present Finance Member that he recognised the principle and as soon as the revenue position warranted he would introduce the necessary legislation.

Mr. *Winterbotham* believed that it would be wise that such a resolution be put on record and in this connection he congratulated the Bengal Chamber on their pertinacity in the matter. The resolution was carried.

#### Agricultural Indebtedness

*Rai Bahadur P. Mukherjee* (Punjab) moved the tenth resolution on agricultural indebtedness. The resolution stated:—

"This Association, while recognising that the initiation of measures designed to relieve the indebtedness of the agricultural population belongs strictly to the domain of provincial governments, would impress on the Government of India the desirability, in view of such measures affecting contractual relations between the debtor and the creditor classes, of more or less uniform legislation in the several provinces, and would recommend that, to secure this end, the outlines of such legislation be indicated by the Government of India for adoption by provincial governments with only such minor alterations as local conditions may render necessary in particular areas."

The mover pointed out that his Chamber were of opinion that more or less uniform action be followed by provinces.

Sir *Edward Benthall* (Bengal) agreed that it was essential that there should be co-ordination of all provinces. He suggested that there be an Inter-Provincial Conference on the matter.

Mr. *T. Gavin-Jones* (Upper India) supported the suggestions of Sir E. Benthall.

Mr. *Winterbotham* suggested that in order to make it clear, they should draft a resolution and postpone consideration for some time, but he would not at present support the resolution in the present form.

The matter was postponed till the next day for further discussion.

#### Staff of Experts in Economic Matters

Mr. *F. Birley* (Madras) moved the eleventh resolution regarding the staff of experts in economic matters. The resolution stated:—

That in the opinion of this Association it is desirable that there should be attached to the Government of India a small permanent staff of experts with practical experience in economic matters to advise Government, and that, in view of the growing tendency towards the conclusion of commercial treaties between India and other countries, it is desirable that the Department of Commerce should be strengthened in order to provide the nucleus of an Overseas Branch.

Mr. *T. Gavin-Jones* moved an amendment that the following words, in the fifth line, be added, "To advise Government and keep in closer touch with commercial bodies than it is possible at present."

Mr. *Winterbotham* said that what they wanted was to advise the Government on economic proposals, before they adopted this policy.

Mr. *P. Mukherjee* said that the principle underlying the resolution be unanimously accepted. The resolution, as amended, was carried.

#### Parcels by Air Mail

Mr. *J. G. Ryan* (Upper India Chamber) moved the twelfth resolution on the carriage of parcels by airmail. The resolution stated :—

“That this Association is of opinion that parcels intended for despatch from India by air mail, should be accepted at any Indian air port instead of being, as at present, sent by rail to Karachi there to await the next outgoing air mail.

Mr. *Winterbotham* said that his Chamber was in complete agreement with the object underlying the resolution. He suggested that the position would be better, if the following suggestion was carried. “This Association urges the Government of India to make such arrangements with internal air services in India as necessary to make possible for air parcels to be carried by air within India.”

Mr. *P. Mukherjee* supported the amendment, which was carried.

#### Communications

Mr. *G. R. Campbell* (Bengal Chamber) moved the resolution on communications : The resolution ran as follows :—

“That in the opinion of this Association it is essential in the interests of the co-ordination of transport throughout India that early steps be taken to redistribute the port-folios of the Governor-General's Executive Council in order to provide for a Member for Communications whose portfolio should include Railways, Roads, Civil Aviation and Posts and Telegraphs, but should exclude Inland Water Transport and Coastal Shipping which should be included in the portfolio of the Member for Commerce.”

The mover said he wished to make it clear that the resolution was moved in no spirit of antagonism to railways. It was moved with the hope that subsequent development might bring railways into closer touch with commercial firms.

Mr. *U. N. Sen* (Punjab Chamber) seconding the resolution said that this Chamber had authorised him to state that inland water transport and coastal shipping should also be included in the portfolio of the Minister for Transport and Communication. Mr. Sen added that a convenient opportunity had now arrived. The retirement of two members of the Council at the end of the financial year, seemed to be a good opportunity for this redistribution and for that reason early decision of the matter was very desirable. The resolution was carried.

#### Broadcasting of Cotton Prices

*Rai Bahadur L. Binda Saran*, moved the last resolution on the broadcasting of cotton prices. The resolution stated :—

“That in the opinion of this Association it is essential that immediate steps be taken to recommence the daily 7 a. m. broadcast of cotton prices in New York and Bombay from the Bombay Station of the Indian State Broadcasting Service. The recent stoppage of this broadcast was a retrograde measure and has adversely affected trade and business activity, especially in cotton growing areas, as the wireless news is heard from one to three hours before telegrams can be received.

Mr. *J. G. Ryan*, seconding, said that broadcasting of cotton prices was indispensable. Mr. *P. Mukherjee* supported the resolution, which was carried. The conference then adjourned.

### Second day—Calcutta—18th. December 1934

#### Agricultural Indebtedness

At the Associated Chambers of Commerce meeting to-day, the following amended resolution, with the consent of Mr. *T. Gavin Jones* (Upper India), *Rai Bahadur P. Mukherjee* (Punjab Chamber), Mr. *G. L. Winterbotham* (Bombay) and *Sir Edward Benthall* (Bengal), who spoke on the original resolution on the agenda yesterday, was put from the chair and carried :—

“In view of the All-India importance of the relations between debtor and creditor, the Association recommends to the Government of India that a Conference of representatives of Provincial Governments should be called forthwith to co-ordinate all measures, legislative or otherwise, designed by Provincial Governments to effect relief of indebtedness of the agricultural population and that in view of its possible

repercussion upon commercial interests, representatives of Chambers of Commerce should be associated with the Conference."

### Separation of Burma

Sir *Edward Benthall* moved the following resolution :

"The Associated Chambers emphatically record their opinion that the separation of Burma should not be allowed to become a pretext for imposing extra taxation as a measure of budgetary expedience, to the detriment of trading interests in both countries and to the further embarrassment of trade recovery.

"In their opinion any trade convention which may be concluded between the two Governments should in the first place be arranged on the basis of the free trade relations which now exist between the two countries, with due allowance solely for the substitution of import duties for existing excise duties."

Mr. *C. G. Wodehouse* moved the following amended resolution :—

"The Chamber emphatically record their opinion that the separation of Burma should not be allowed to become a pretext for imposing extra taxation as a measure of budgetary expedience, to the detriment of trading interests in both countries and to the further embarrassment of trade recovery.

"In their opinion, any trade convention which may be concluded between the two Governments should in the first place be arranged on the basis of the free trade relations which now exist between the two countries, with due allowance, solely, for the substitution of equivalent import duties for the existing excise duties and maintaining the existing differentials between import and excise duties."

In the course of his speech, Sir *E. Benthall* said : 'The resolution primarily stands on the agenda because of the impending reforms, but is also of interest because of the importance of the main principle involved, namely, the modern tendency of Governments to seize any opportunity to increase trade barriers, a tendency, which in my opinion, is to-day probably the most vicious of all causes preventing recovery of trade and it is on these grounds primarily, that I shall urge the resolution. I am very glad to hear that the fact is recognised by His Excellency the Viceroy in his opening speech. The question is by no means a new one. It has been before the Chambers on more than one occasion. More recently, it has formed the subject of a very able memorandum submitted to the Joint Select Committee by Mr. *K. B. Harper* on the trade relations between India and Burma, if separated, a document which I can heartily commend to any one interested in the subject by reason of the simplicity and clarity with which he has reviewed the subject and of the breadth of vision which he has shown concerning possible dangers.'

He did not propose to go into the details of the case except to say that his claim so far as it can be condensed in one or two sentences was 'there shall be free trade between India and Burma in all indigenous articles and products with due allowance for the substitution of import duties for the existing excise duties and that India and Burma shall each be free to alter its tariffs in respect of its trade with mother countries, subject to reciprocal arrangement for protection of each country against re-exportation from the other country and subject to the scheduling of certain articles, duties which shall not be subject to alteration except by agreement'.

Proceeding, Sir *E. Benthall* said that he would freely admit that the Joint Committee and the Governments were faced with a difficult situation. Having determined upon separation of Burma, financial obstacles had to be overcome. The problem was not easy and in their proposals the Committee had admittedly taken into consideration the desirability of preventing as much dislocation as possible. He continued that it was the duty of trading interests to make clear to the Government the view that they take of the proposals, which would be governed by its effect upon trade. He would say that Bengal industrialists were very deeply alarmed at the possibilities of import duties on such articles as coal and paper into Burma. It was possible that the Government of Burma would take the view that the duty on coal would react upon themselves as large consumers of coal for their railways, but the experience of businessmen in recent years has been that when pressed for money Governments were just as liable as private individuals or company directors to take the most short-sighted views and the most peculiar action. It was upon the principles of free trade that he desired primarily to press this resolution. Businessmen all over the world were now waking up to the fact that of all hindrances to trade recovery, the continued imposition of trade barriers and quotas

was most detrimental. Business now, after some years of tribulation, had more or less adjusted itself to the fluctuations or exchanges and movements which a decade or so ago would have convulsed them. Interchanges of goods was now part of the normal conduct of business and there was too much evidence that exchanges had a tendency to settle down. He was not quarrelling with the policy of India and indeed of any other country, provided protection was discriminating and provided conditions for the grant of protection were adhered to.

Concluding, Sir Edward Benthall appealed to the Punjab Chamber, who had not hitherto seen eye to-eye with the rest, to joint with them on this occasion in drawing the Government's attention to the strength of feeling of trade and commerce upon these proposals.

Seconding the resolution, Mr. C. G. Wodehouse (Burma), said that the relation between Indians and Burmans had been strained on more than one occasion in recent years and it was most important to do everything to bring separation into effect in an atmosphere of goodwill. From every point of view, except perhaps for small immediate budgetary gains, it was clearly in the interests of both countries to start on a basis of agreements that the existing free trade relations should continue for a period.

#### BURMA CHAMBER AND SEPARATION

Explaining the attitude of the Burma Chamber towards the general question of separation, Mr. Wodehouse said that while sympathising with racial, religious and national feelings, which had led Burmans to aim at separation as their goal, his Chamber had endeavoured to consider its consequences from a detached and impartial point of view. The opinions of individual members had offered, but it had been generally agreed that an equitable financial settlement between India and Burma should show a substantial advantage to the latter and that India's fiscal policy has been detrimental to the interests of Burma, which was, and was likely to remain, almost entirely an agricultural country which needed the cheapest possible imports of manufactured articles. The third point to which the Chamber attached the greatest importance was that of a trade agreement of her separation. Here, the Burma Chamber had always been of the opinion that it was essential, in the interests of both countries, that free trade should be preserved as far as possible, allowing only for conversion of excise and consumption duties at the existing rates into import duties. The consideration outweighed all others and the more carefully had the question been considered, the more convinced had members of his Chamber become that separation would only be of advantage to Burma if this condition was fulfilled. He cordially welcomed the wording of the resolution that on no account should the budgetary expedience of imposing tariffs be allowed to take precedence of general trading interests and emphasised the "remarkable unity" shown since the publication of the J. P. C. Report by all sanctions of the business community in Burma on the desirability of presenting the *Status quo* in regard to relations with India.

Mr. T. Gavin Jones (Upper India) said that it was quite possible that Indians in Burma would have a difficult time, but he agreed that Burma should be separated, and was only fair to Burma. He asked the Association to remember that, according to the J. P. C. Report, India was going to lose three crores of revenue by separation. The trade between India and Burma, he said, would depend entirely on reciprocal arrangements between the two countries. After all, the resolution was merely an expression of a pious hope.

Supporting the resolution, Mr. Winterbotham (Bombay), said that after the Viceroy's remarks yesterday, it was very difficult indeed to visualise the Government of India taking steps to impose tariffs on trade between Burma and India. They were not prepared to admit that Burma should henceforth be regarded as an economic unit, separate from India. He dissociated entirely from the view that the resolution was merely an expression of a pious hope.

Mr. Mukherjee (Punjab), supported the resolution.

Sir Edward Benthall accepted Mr. Wodehouse's amendment. As regards Mr. Gavin Jones' remarks, he pointed out that the resolution states clearly that any trade convention between the two Governments should be arranged on the basis of the free trade relations now existing between the two countries. The resolution, as amended, was carried. Thereafter, the Chamber began to discuss the J. P. C. Report. Proceedings were not open to the Press.

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# The Madras Chamber of Commerce

The annual general meeting of the Madras Chamber of Commerce was held at Madras on the 11th December 1934 in the premises of the Chamber, with Mr. W. M. Browning, the out-going President in the chair. A large number of members were present.

Mr. W. M. Browning, after presenting the annual Report of the Chamber, moved that it be adopted. He then said:—

You will no doubt expect me to refer to the Joint Select Committee Report. As you are aware, the Report was published on the 22nd of November last, since when the Committee and certain other members of the Chamber, who were co-opted, have been and still are giving it careful and detailed study. I do not, however, propose to express any opinion in this regard to-day as the Report will be considered at the annual meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India when a statement will probably be made.

A general review of trade throughout the year gives rise to mingled feelings of optimism and pessimism. There are signs of recovery in certain directions; in fact, I might go further and say that in certain directions the corner has been turned, but I cannot say that trade in all directions shows general improvement. Goods traffic on the railways has increased and prices of such commodities as wheat, rice, cotton, tea, rubber have advanced. While, however, there are these signs of internal improvements, the difficulties in the way of a general improvement in international trade seem to increase. Nations in Europe, in pursuit of doctrines of economic nationalism and in defence of their currency positions, have continued to encourage restrictions, quotas, import and export boards and barter agreements. The position of Germany with regard to the supply of foreign exchange for exports is an example of the difficulties to which I refer. 'Look at America. What is going to happen there? He would, I think, be a brave man who dared to prophesy. The uncertainty of the position there is an example of the effect upon world conditions of a drastic and 'white-heat' reorganisation of internal industrial and financial methods. Trade in Central Europe has been dislocated as the result of attempts at economic nationalism which have divided Europe by a hundred barriers which restrict the natural flow of trade.

There would appear to be little hope of a general revival of international trade until some agreement has been arrived at in regard to the removal of restrictions and the lowering of tariffs. In this connection it is pleasing to recall two events of great economic significance for India. The first is the conclusion of the Indo-Japanese agreement which ensures an adequate off-take for India's cotton and limits the import of piecegoods from Japan to a known maximum. In fact in this agreement may be perceived the basis of further agreements by which goods are exchanged to a maximum quota on both sides.

## WORKING OF THE OTTAWA PACT

The other event is the publication of the Report of the Government of India on the working of the first year under the Ottawa Agreement. The Report of Dr. Meek is a voluminous but interesting document. Its contents and all other relative documents were studied by a Committee of the Legislative Assembly. The majority of the Committee are of the opinion that most of the preferences enjoyed by India in respect of her more important export have been of definite value to her export trade; whereas the preferences given by India have been of definite assistance to the United Kingdom and have neither affected Indian revenues or industries nor placed a burden on the consumer. It is interesting to note that the preference between India and the non-self-governing Colonies have had little effect upon trade exchanges. The position with regard to Ceylon, however, is not satisfactory and I hope that the Government of India will take to heart the recommendations of the Assembly Committee, namely, that after a consideration of the Report of the Indian coconut-growing industry, negotiations should be resumed with a view to placing Indo-Ceylon trade upon a more satisfactory basis. I should here also like to refer to the question of importations of foreign rice. The continued import of foreign



rise on a scale hitherto never experienced has a bad psychological effect on the market and tends to retard the healthy and normal rise which other parts of India have experienced. It is also to be hoped that the Government of India will not further delay taking reasonable action to curtail the imports from foreign countries and thus assist the producer in the South to obtain a reasonable price and contribute to the prosperity of the whole Presidency.

#### ABOLITION OF DUTY ON RAW HIDES

While dealing with general conditions, it will not be out of place for me to draw the attention of the Chamber to the growing preoccupation of the Central Legislature with economic affairs. This is due to the seemingly inevitable but somewhat alarming extent to which the Government control has invaded the economic sphere. This factor serves as a reminder of the importance of ensuring that the point of view of the commercial and industrial interests in the country (whether Indian or European) is continuously and effectively represented in the Legislatures. In this connection I would recall that the abolition of the export duty on raw hides, which was part of the last budget, was brought very prominently into view by Sir George Schuster in his Budget speech this year. Madras' views were very ably expounded by Mr. James in the Assembly but unfortunately the abolition of the duty was agreed to and the Madras tanning industry thereby seriously affected.

Again, representations were made in regard to certain feature of the budget relating to postal charges. Some of these are still under consideration; but I am glad to observe that the Government of India has agreed, at the suggestion of the European Group, to an advisory committee in connection with the Posts and Telegraphs Department. This should ensure that commercial, trading and industrial interests will, in future, be consulted before proposals which affect the postal rates, are made in the Assembly as part of the budget.

#### ROAD-RAIL CONFERENCE

It is gratifying to note that arising out of the Road-Rail Conference held at Delhi in April 1933, the Madras Government has appointed a Special Officer to carry out a survey of the road requirements of this Province. It is hoped that the Government will see fit to extend the scope of this country so that it may embrace the ordered and co-ordinated development of all forms of communications—Roads, Railways, Waterways and Airways. It is essential in the best interests of communications, so vital to commercial interests, that this should be done so that the various forms of transport and communications may be complementary, and not competitive to one another, thereby avoiding wasteful capital expenditure, and competitive extravagances the cost of which we must ultimately bear. I am also pleased to observe that the Madras Government has recently appointed a Board of communications which comprises representatives of Government, Railways, Commerce, Planting and Road interests; this Chamber is directly represented on this Board.

#### PIECE GOODS

With regard to piece goods, it has been an eventful, but somewhat disappointing year for imports of Lancashire piece goods into Madras. The year opened with the successful negotiation of the Indo-Japanese trade agreement to which I have already referred, Although freely criticised both in India and in Japan at the time of its introduction, the Agreement appears to be working fairly satisfactorily and, although the maximum yardage which can be imported from Japan under the Agreement is considerable, it is at least satisfactory to know that this represents, for the time being at any rate, the limit of the competition which importers and the Indian mills can expect from these progressive competitors.

The Agreement was settled in January and simultaneously cotton prices began to advance. With minor set-backs there was almost continual appreciation until early in August by which time the price of Middling American Spot cotton in Liverpool has risen from 5.39d. to 7.42d. per lb.

With two such favourable factors operating early in the year, importers were justified in expecting better times at any rate during the latter months of the year. But the figures do not bear this out, and the Board of Trade Returns for January-October 1934 show that the exports of Lancashire cloth to Madras—in thousands square yards—have dwindled to 46,773 in the first ten months of the year, as compared with 54,093 in 1933 and 66,674 in 1932. This result is all the more

disappointing for Madras importers, in view of the fact that the All-India returns for the first ten months of this year show an improvement of nearly 60 million square yards on the similar figure for last year.

There appear to be two main reasons for the set-back which the piece-goods trade here is experiencing. First of all, South India being primarily dependant on agriculture, the purchasing power of the consumer has dwindled with the fall in the price of his produce. Fortunately, that is a factor which is now showing some signs of righting itself. The second cause is that Indian mill goods, particularly dhooties, are rapidly replacing Lancashire goods of similar styles in this market, due to the very considerable improvements which have been effected by the Indian mills in recent years, and on which they are to be congratulated.

There is one new development in the trade to which reference should be made, and that is the growing importance of Cochin as a port of entry for piece goods. With increasing transport facilities, both steamer and rail, it is not unreasonable to expect that a valuable portion of the trade which Madras formerly enjoyed in piece goods will be diverted through this new port, due to its proximity to Madura, the most important up-country piece-goods centre in the whole of the presidency. Already Madras dealers are experiencing considerable competition from one or two of the larger Cochin dealers, and this is likely to increase when the freight rates by sea to Cochin come into line with those of Madras.

#### TANNING INDUSTRY

Last year your Chairman was able to congratulate the tanning industry on the results of their efforts to maintain reasonable prices for their products by voluntary restriction of output and agreement with regard to minimum selling prices. Unfortunately this eminently sensible policy was allowed to lapse early in the current year, and I fear that for some time previously the agreement had been more honoured in the breach than in the observance. Over-production and a corresponding eagerness to sell once more became the order of the day and the result was a steady decline in value which from January to October dropped by 20 per cent to 30 per cent. Towards the end of the last month, however, a fresh agreement has been made and it is to be hoped that a stricter observance of the terms and conditions will be maintained on this occasion.

You are aware of the repeated and continuous efforts which this Chamber has made on behalf of the Tanning industry to maintain, if not to enhance, the measure of protection which was afforded by the export duty on the new material. Our case was founded on the belief that the Government of India was committed to the protection of indigenous industries and when I compare their fiscal policy towards the sugar, steel and textile industries with their unaccommodating attitude towards the tanning industry, I find it difficult to speak with restraint. So far from enhancing the protection which the industry so badly needed, the export duty on raw hides has, as I have mentioned earlier in my speech, been withdrawn and protection enjoyed by tanned skins is reduced to a minimum by the lowering of the customs tariff valuation.

These anomalies in the Government of India's fiscal policy are, to a large extent, the result of strong pressure brought to bear by the raw hides and skins exporting interests in the North of India, who have consistently belittled the importance of the Madras tanning industry, and I hope that the in-coming Committee will again give very careful consideration to this very important matter, bearing in mind what Sir Joseph Bhore said in the Assembly in March last when he promised to examine the case of the tanning industry if it is presented to Government.

#### GROUNDNUTS

A comparison between 1932-33 and 1933-34 seasons shows that the crop during the latter period decreased by some 60,000 tons whereas exports increased by some 33,400 tons which came out of the 1932-33 crop of which there was a substantial carry-over into the season now under review.

Heavy fluctuations in prices were witnessed during the year; the range being from £8 to £12 per ton. The season commenced with a dull market with prices for new crop Coromandel groundnuts in the region of £40-10-0 per ton. A continuous decline took place throughout the autumn and winter months and up to the beginning of April, when the price of Indian groundnuts reached £8 per ton, which is probably the lowest price ever touched. The Home value went

even below this level and £7-16-0 was registered. At the close of the year, Nigerian and Rufisque groundnuts were also offered freely. April, however, saw the turning point in the season as from then onwards prices gradually improved and by the end of September £12 per ton was obtainable, the main reason for the improvement being the bad state of various crops in America owing to drought.

Apart from the low priced soya beans, copra and the numerous other substitutes that compete with groundnuts, the outstanding feature of the past season was the unsettled international situation and the import restrictions which most countries enforced. Further, the violent exchange movements of different currencies resulting in creating a state of acute nervousness in the market and a hand to mouth policy was adopted by buyers.

I cannot leave this subject without mentioning that the new crop (1934-35) is estimated to be about 50 per cent less than that of last season, owing to the smaller area cultivated on account of the low prices prevailing at the time of sowing and also due to the effect of subsequent drought. Despite this, a rapid decline of £2 per ton has taken place since the beginning of the current season and the prospects of the groundnut trade appear to be anything but bright for the present.

Dealing with the Planting Industry, the international agreement between the three chief tea producing countries to restrict tea exports, to which your Chairman referred last year, has continued to work satisfactorily but the proposed legislation for the restriction of a crop as a supplement to the restriction of exports has not yet been passed and voluntary restrictions for a second year is in force.

As a result of the International Agreement of Rubber Producers representing approximately 98 per cent of the world's production, having agreed to restrict rubber exports, rubber prices have risen to an average of 6 and a half pence to 7 and a half pence per pound after having been as low as 2 and one-fourth pence per pound in the early part of last year. The quota allotted to South India by the International Rubber Regulation Committee has, however, given cause for dissatisfaction and the United Planters Association of Southern India have taken the matter up with the Government of India and requested that a claim for the revision of rubber exports from South India be placed before the International Rubber Regulation Committee.

Last month we said good-bye to Sir George Stanley who completed his term of office as Governor of our Province. His place has been taken by His Excellency Lord Erskine to whom we respectfully extend a warm welcome and an assurance that he can rely on all the assistance that this Chamber is in a position to give him.

## The Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce

The seventh annual meeting of the Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce was held at Bombay on the 20th. December 1934. Mr. *Walchand Hirachand*, President, said :—

The recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee are now accepted by Parliament as a general basis of the future constitution for India. It will be therefore appropriate if I take this opportunity to express in general the sentiments of the Indian Commercial Community about them. When one looks into this document, one finds that inspite of all that is said by the various speakers in Parliament, it bears on the face of it, to say the least, the stamp of a half-hearted measure dictated by expediency and not a great statesmanlike act done by one great nation to another great nation. I doubt if it is really something which Britain should have offered to India after all these discussions of the last few years. There is evident, in this Report, the concern of the Joint Parliamentary Committee to perpetuate the position of vantage which British Commerce and Industry occupy in this country and the question of India's economic interests seems to have been absolutely subordinated to this main consideration. I am stating only a fact when I say that none of the political parties in India is satisfied with the offer, although they have voiced their dissatisfaction in different ways. What the States have said of it, subject to reservations, is in regard to what concerned them and not British India and even they like to wait and see the

actual Bill before committing themselves finally. It was stated in Parliament that the Government of India and Provincial Governments have given assurance that a constitution framed on these lines would work and that there would be found men ready to work it. Although one may be prepared to concede the correctness of this in the present situation of the country, I submit that, it does not mean that it carries with it the willing consent of the intelligent and politically conscious Indians, and consequently of the masses who follow them. Except for the All-India Federation, there is to my mind little in it to recommend it to us as it stands. Real political power is not to be found there—power which will enable India to evolve her destiny and to take her rightful place amongst the great nations of the World. A Bill on the lines of this Report, I am afraid, will not make for peace between the two countries; it will only widen the gulf existing between them. Unless therefore better counsels still prevail, I see no prospect of real and lasting peace and consequential betterment of the economic situation of the country in the years to come. Not only there is to be no adequate opportunity left for Indian enterprise and business to develop, but even the little scope she had so far for doing this is no longer to be there, due to the "special responsibility" it is proposed to place on the Governor-General (para 345 of the J. P. C. Report) in respect of "prevention of measures, legislative or administrative, which would subject British goods imported into India from the United Kingdom to discriminating or penal treatment." To make clear the meaning of this, it is further proposed that the Governor-General's Instrument of Instruction should give him full and clear guidance requiring him to step in to prevent the imposition of tariffs or restrictions or negotiation of trade agreements with other nations, if he is satisfied that they are conceived to injure British interests even if they were not so in form but the Governor-General considered them to be so in fact. In face of these clear unequivocal words it is difficult to believe whether the J. P. C. really expect Indians to take their pious words seriously when they say that they contemplate no measures which would interfere with the position attained by India through the Fiscal Convention. Whether this new special responsibility suggested be due to statements of very disturbing character from time to time made by influential persons in India as the Joint Parliamentary Committee observe or to the incessant clamour of British vested interests, the net result of such a provision will be definitely detrimental to the growth of India's commerce and industry, which are at present in their infancy and which stand in need of protective care of the State.

#### NO FREEDOM IN FINANCIAL MATTERS

It has to be remembered that the Governor-General is to be invested in this behalf with every wide power which he is to use solely at his discretion; Governors also are to have similar power and as if all this is not enough, in case of doubt, they are to be empowered to reserve the matter for the signification of His Majesty's pleasure! What little restricted freedom India enjoyed so far under the Fiscal Convention altogether disappears henceforth under the proposed agreement and the Fiscal Convention is to be a myth of the past! It is no consolation to find that the J. P. C. endorse the suggestion about the grant of subsidies and bounties of the External Capital Committee to concerns fulfilling certain conditions. It is well-known that the Indian Commercial and public opinion has never found the conclusion of the External Capital Committee to be adequate or satisfactory either. Although foreign capital may be necessary to bring about rapid industrial development of India the question of the conditions on which it should be admitted, especially after India adopted a policy of discriminating protection does become a very important one. The recommendation of the J. P. C. in respect of Federal or Provincial Acts by which it may be proposed to give bounties or subsidies, while endorsing the External Capital Committee's proposals in this behalf, places the non-Indian Companies established in India prior to the passing of any Act authorising grant of a bounty or subsidy on a footing of perfect equality with Indian concerns. The J. P. C. Report thus definitely improve upon the position taken in the White Paper or defined by the External Capital Committee, to India's disadvantage as usual. It passes one's comprehension to see what necessity will be there for new non-Indian Companies to be formed when the old ones can well ex-



tend their activities to fresh fields and escape all necessity of fulfilling Indian registration, Rupee capital, and a proportion of Indian Directorate, etc. ! It can well be considered whether under these circumstances it will not pay India to defer industrialization till she herself finds all the necessary capital and personnel to finance and run the industries. It will be seen from what has been observed so far that British interests and British industries claim equal benefit and equal protection along with Indian interests which have been struggling to build up strength in face of unequal competition of interests with enormous reserves, powerful organisation, great engineering and technical knowledge and vast experience, at their command. One finds the sacrifice of Indian interests writ large everywhere in the report particularly in paragraphs 342-357 dealing with this subject of commercial discrimination. If British industrialists and businessmen have done pioneering work and brought some measure of benefit to us, they have had generally more than an adequate return and in some cases a return out of all proportion to their investment and labour as they had almost a free field. That being the situation I am unable to see how Indian enterprise and business can find room to grow—and grow they must—unless British interests are prepared to gradually recede from the field they occupy. The case of Indian shipping is a glaring example. The J. P. C. have bestowed special attention on the subject of ships and shipping, a subject which has been in the limelight in this country and in Britain particularly since Mr. Haji's Bill was successfully piloted through the Legislative Assembly through two readings. The vested shipping interests in this country then raised a great hue and cry. Government never made any secret of their opposition and they never relished the introduction of the measure ! The recommendations of the J.P.C. now set at rest all doubts on the subject by taking away the power of the Indian legislature to develop a purely Indian Mercantile Marine. Just as the recommendations, to which I have referred before, permanently take away the power of the Indian legislature to try to develop the industries of the country except under conditions under which such development seems hardly possible, the special recommendation in connection with ships and shipping takes away the power of the Indian legislature to develop a Merchant Marine capitalised, owned, manned and controlled by Indians. Reservation of coastal traffic to national bottoms is considered to be the very first step in the successful development of real merchant marine of a country and shipping is considered to be one of the key-industries of a nation. It is therefore most unfair that any action to build it up should be declared to be ultra vires of the Indian Legislature. Ships registered in U. K. are not to be subjected by Law in British India to any discrimination whatsoever as regards the Ship Officers or crew or passengers or cargo to which ships registered in British India would not be subjected in the U. K. (para 355 J. P. C. Report) and this in spite of Sir Alfred Watson's following unequivocal before the Joint Parliamentary Committee, "I recognize that Indian company after company which endeavoured to develop a coastal service has been financially shattered by the heavy combination of British interests." It will not, I think, be too much to say that India seem to be branded for many years to come with economic thralldom with all opportunity to improve her position virtually denied to her. These recommendations, particularly the one specially made with respect to ships and shipping, make clear once for ever what the non-Indian vested interests want. They want to retain their present position of economic domination in this country and they are not willing to move even an inch from it. This is "fair field and no favour" which they are asking ! Just as these recommendations give a go-bye to the Fiscal Convention, they unceremoniously disown or throw overboard the principle of discriminating protection. They also virtually shelve the Report of the Mercantile Marine Committee. That is how the new regime is to replace the old regime ! If we are to be thus bound hand and foot, I am unable to understand how the future Government of the country can function and provide a proper standard of living for our country's population and how it can be successful in meeting the growing unemployment and keeping the people contented. I will only ask all concerned to ponder well over all these implications of the recommendations of the J. P. C's Report and see if we cannot do something unitedly even now to save the position before it is irretrievably lost and have some of the most objectionable features suitably modified.

#### RECIPROCITY

This brings us to the question of the so-called principle of reciprocity. I admit



there is the well-known principle of reciprocity, but its application in the way here contemplated twists things out of their natural perspective. I cannot understand why the J. P. C. insist upon its application only this way and not the other way round. I am quite prepared to have restrictions put upon Indian trade, commerce and industry including Shipping and other commercial services as Banking Insurance, etc., in the U. K. if India puts similar restrictions upon British business and enterprise here, herself taking the initiative in the matter. If reciprocity is accepted in this way, I have no objection. Reciprocity between two fairly equally industrially and economically developed countries is an understandable proposition, but not the one proposed in the J. P. C's Report which seems to be a reciprocal agreement between a lion and a lamb.

It may perhaps be suggested—in a spirit of charity—that but for the alleged disturbing statements from certain influential quarters in India, all these detrimental improvements on the White Paper would not have been made by the J. P. C. I, for one, am not prepared to take this view, for in so doing, one would be insulting British intelligence and statesmanship. Or again, it may also be suggested that perhaps the J. P. C. had in their minds the words of some Congressmen when they drafted these paragraphs. In that case, I am afraid that what these Congressmen meant was not a repudiation of obligations of anything of the kind, but merely a revision, after a proper inquiry of the proper figure of India's public debt. It is well-known to-day how Britain who seems to consider herself to be the custodian of the credit not only of India but of Europe also is refusing point blank to meet her obligations in respect of war debts to the United States of America, no matter whether she is in a position to pay or not. Germany has refused to pay because she says she is unable to pay. So even if an Indian were to be serious, while talking about the repudiation of his country's obligations, he would be following at least two western and civilised Gurus and will not be in bad company in either case, whatever be his reasons for doing so.

#### SEPARATION OF BURMA

Burma is to be separated from India. If a pledge was ever broken and the clearly expressed will of the nation ever flouted it was here and over this question. The matter could well have been left to the Burmese people to settle but the powers that be were opposed to this and their will must be done. The powers that are to be granted to Burma after separation under its new constitution contain provisions which will work prejudicially so far as Indian interests are concerned and I must sound here a note of warning in this respect. Side by side with the separation of Burma, an agreement is to be made between India and Burma. The Indian Commercial Community would like to see that no such agreement is made unless it has an opportunity to express its view thereon and the Indian Legislature ratifies it. The power that will be secured by the Government of Burma to impose restrictions not only on the entry of Indian labour but on the entry of other classes of Indians as well, leaving the British people free to enter it at their will has great implications which merit immediate attention. While British capital and British personnel is free from such restrictions Indian capital and Indian personnel only is penalised. It is often asked why Indians claim equality of treatment in Burma when they are not prepared to allow it to Britishers in India. My answer to that is that a Scotchman is treated with equality in England on account of his long association and contact. The Indian is in every sense of the word nearer to the Burman than the Britisher and the point need not be stressed further. In view of the far-reaching importance of the question, I should like to suggest the President of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry to convene a special session of the body early next month, so that the Indian Mercantile Community can formulate their views and devise measures to protect their interests and prevent the economic cordon from being tightened by the Britisher round them. I cannot but enter here a strong protest against the subtle propaganda which has found a place in J. P. C's Report against Indian money-lender and Indian wage-earner in Burma. It would have been better if the statements made had not been made.

# The Mysore Chamber of Commerce

The eighteenth annual general meeting of the Mysore Chamber of Commerce was held under the presidency of Mr. R. Sundaram Iyer at Bangalore on the 29th August 1934. In the course of his presidential address, after according a hearty welcome to the Dewan of Mysore and condoling the deaths of the Maharani Regent and Hajee Sir Ismail Sait, Mr. Iyer said :—

I now turn to a brief enumeration of the more important activities in which the Chamber engaged itself during the year 1933-34. You will find a detailed account of these activities in the Committee's Report, which has already been presented to you and which, I trust, meets with your approval. From a perusal of the Report you will see that the year under review has been one of considerable activity in Mysore as well as in India as a whole from the economic point of view. The Indo-Japanese Trade Agreement has been concluded ; an Agreement has been reached between Lancashire and India in the matter of the textile trade between these two countries ; the Tariff Board has reported on the question of protection to two great industries of India, viz, Sericulture and Iron and Steel ; and the Government of India have already taken action on the recommendations of the Board in these two respects. Various economic conferences of an all-India character have been held, in which the economic future of the country has been discussed threadbare in its different aspects. Nearer home, in Mysore, we have had various measures of economic importance ushered into existence, and the Chamber, too, kept up its activities to the required high level in keeping with the demands of the economic situation in India in general and in Mysore in particular.

## CHIEF EVENTS OF THE YEAR

I shall now briefly refer to some of the more important events during the year. The Chamber had occasion to meet Mr. C. Ranganatha Rao Sahib Trade Commissioner for Mysore in London, and discuss with him the possibilities of building up our increasing export trade between Mysore and the countries of Europe. It also met during the year Mr. B. D. Asli, the Indian Trade Publicist, Officer, attached to the Indian High Commissioner's Office in London, and similarly discussed with him the possibilities of improving the export trade of the State. The question of the development of the activities of the Chamber into more useful channels also claimed attention. In this connection, it is worthy of note that the Secretary visited, during the course of the year, many important mofussil centres of trade in Mysore with a view to make known and popularize the activities of the Chamber and to secure their co-operation in furtherance of its work. I am glad to say that the response from the mofussil centres has been most encouraging. We have had during the year under active consideration certain valuable suggestions made by Sir M. Visvesvaraya, K. C. I. E. with a view to make the Chamber more popular and useful to the whole State. The Mysore Agriculturist's Regulation also received attention. A Memorandum on certain of its aspects is now under preparation and it will shortly be presented to the Government for their consideration.

As you are aware, the Chamber took a leading part in the matter of securing adequate protection to the Sericultural and the Iron and Steel industries of India, and it can be said without fear of contradiction that the constitution and the work of the Silk Tariff Board and the measures adopted as a result thereof were in a large measure the outcome of the unceasing work carried on by this Chamber. The Mysore Silk Association helped us materially in this connection, while the active aid and co-operation extended to us by the Government proved invaluable. Despite the serious difficulties with which we are still confronted, I may be permitted to say that we have to our credit a good record of another year of useful economic activities.

## THE STATE'S FINANCES

I shall now turn to a review of the economic and financial condition of the State during the year under report. The first thing that engages our attention in this respect is the financial position of the State at the present time. I am glad to state in this connection that after a series of deficit budgets during the past

six or seven years, His Highness's Government were fortunate enough to present surplus budget for the year 1934-35, thanks chiefly to the increase in the mining revenue as a result of the new agreement with the Gold Mining Companies and the higher prices obtaining for gold at present and to the new excise duties on matches and sugar. The anticipated surplus is doubtless small, but we can confidently hope that the expected position will be maintained and improved first and because schemes of large economies are under contemplation and secondly because we have at present, as the custodian of Mysore finances, an Administrator of tried experience with practical knowledge of current finance, from whom we can assuredly expect effective guidance, economic watchfulness and striking results. All the same, I may be permitted to utter a word of caution so that we may be enabled thereby to advance with scrupulous circumspection in the face of the very "stormy economic blizzard" that is still fiercely raging around us. As observed by Sir Mirza M. Ismail, in the course of his Budget Speech at the last session of the Mysore Representative Assembly, "We have still to run under shortened sail to continue many reductions in expenditure which we would fain restore". I have no doubt that the timely counsel of caution and economy implied in this observation of Sir Mirza will not be lost sight of by those who would like to see a forward policy in the Administration of this State.

#### THE SUBSIDY

I must also refer in this connection to that vexatious question, the Subsidy, a subject that Sir Mirza has made peculiarly his own. He has treated it so fully from so many different points of view in his public utterances, that it argues really something like temerity on my part to refer to it to-day. But the matter is so important—it is, if I may so put it, one literally of life and death to the growing millions of this State—that I should, with your permission, say just one word. The tribute levied from this State has been condemned by all in this State—European and Indian; Hindu and Muslim; resident citizen and immigrant trader. The Government of India have accepted the position that it must go. The Secretary of State has not lagged behind in acknowledging that it cannot be retained if the economic well-being of the people of this State is to be bettered. Our friends in the British Provinces should by now have realized that if they want Federation on the footing of these world inequities, they are asking for the moon. This Chamber is not a political body but speaking for it, and as a commercial man myself, I would say that the first step to be taken if a true Federation is to be reared in this land of ours is that ancient and patiently borne injustices of these kinds should be wiped away first by the present Government. Equality of status will lead, without trouble and without loss of time, to the easy building up of the constitutional structure. Federation or no Federation, the public fiat has gone forth that the Subsidy should go, and go it should, without further delay, if we are to progress even to a normal extent. Gentlemen, we of this Chamber being of this firm conviction, our renewed prayer to our Chief and august guest of to-night is that he should not lay down his oars,—to take up the fine metaphor he used in his last Budget Address—until he has brought the ship safely into the harbour. You will all join with me in wishing him godspeed in a renewed representation on this subject, which we should urge he should prefer to the Imperial Government. Our feeling to-day is this: One more attempt, one more knock and the citadel will capitulate.

#### WHY OUR PUBLIC DEBT HAS INCREASED

Gentlemen, I would now pass on to a topic closely allied to the Subsidy. You will remember that within the past fifteen years our Public Debt has increased. Many reasons have been assigned for it but on a careful examination of them it will be found by any person who has any pretensions to a working knowledge of the principles of public finance that they are—most of them—lacking in substance. The fact of the matter is that with the penetrating and ramifying effects of progressive administration inaugurated by Dewan Rangacharlu of undying fame and Sir K. Seshadri Iyer, probably one of the greatest constructive statesmen modern India has known and under the impetus given in more recent times by Sir M. Visvesvaraya, who to-day is perhaps the most famous practical economist that India can boast of, Mysore has advanced and out-distanced many a British Indian Province in maintaining ideals of Administration which are rooted in mother earth. The result has been that not only has the country prospered, the population

increased and education eagerly sought after, but also the very progressive character of the Government has demanded more expenditure. The art of expenditure is more difficult than even the art of raising revenue but a Government like ours, which has an inexhaustible revenue, condemned as it is by its land-locked character and by the surrender of its rights to land customs, cannot meet the persistent demands made on it. The result has been an increase of Public Debt to meet urgent public needs. In a British Province—say Bombay or Madras—they would have put up—as they did in fact in regard to Provincial contributions—a hue and cry against their inexhaustible revenues and asked for instant and total abolition of anything like a subsidy that the Government of India have so long levied on us to meet the needs, which, remember, are not our own but those of the British Province as a whole. This is a position that the people of Mysore cannot bear with equanimity much longer. But that apart, I must invite your attention to the fact that there is a close connection between our Public Debt and the Subsidy levied from us. A Public Debt may be a necessity, but it should be limited by considerations of the revenues we can raise. And if we have to make over a substantial part of our revenues for expenditure elsewhere—forget not that we are with the British Provinces bearing our part of the India Government's expenditure on defence and the like from the indirect levies made on us—we cannot but be driven to borrow, sometimes even beyond our just limits. Gentlemen, I will not say more on this head but will only refer to one more aspect of this matter before I leave it. Lord Irwin, in announcing the remission of a part of the Subsidy some years back, said that our Administration was modern and that our expenditure was accordingly justifiably high and that as these facts were beyond dispute or cavil, he said, he felt bound to treat Mysore State as a British Indian Province in this regard and remit a part of the Subsidy. What we now seek of the Government of India is that they should act up the policy laid down by Lord Irwin's truly Christian Viceroy, whose guiding motto was the Golden Rule of "Do unto others as you would be done by". We do hope most sincerely and most earnestly that Sir Mirza will persevere in his just demand. The whole of Mysore is behind him in this matter and we hope he will not rest until he wins through.

#### THE CONVERSION LOAN

Before leaving the subject of Finance, I may observe that the policy of floating a long term Conversion Loan at a lower rate of interest to replace the existing loans carrying higher rates of interest maturing at different periods is a perfectly sound one. The recent conversion loan of the Government was accordingly a sound one in principle. It is gratifying to note it proved successful. Financial critics have suggested that the utilisation of each subscription to the extent of Rs. 2 and a half crores might well have been avoided as the State had raised cash loans so recently as 1930 to the extent of about Rs. 4 and a half crores. There will, however, be general agreement with the view of Sir Mirza M. Ismail, our Dewan, that "the Government will be able to pay off the unconverted securities maturing before 1941, which amount to Rs. 380 lakhs, without resort to further public borrowing. The total Public Debt of the State stands to-day at Rs. 14 and a half crores (permanent debt of Rs. 9.5 crores and unfunded debt aggregating Rs. 5 crores), the interest and sinking fund charges incurred on it being about Rs. 75 lakhs. The primary objects of a conversion loan being the consolidation of the permanent debt into a long-term interest-bearing loan, so that the finances of the State may be materially relieved under the heads of interest and sinking fund charges and the reduction of the unfunded debt to reasonable limits, the country, I think, will be glad to see the policy of the Conversion Loan being pursued further as the present market conditions seem propitious for the purpose. Such a policy might still further help to lighten the burden of public debt in the State and make available further funds for nation-building activities.

#### NEED FOR A STOCK EXCHANGE

I may take this opportunity to refer to the high credit the securities of the State have long enjoyed in the financial markets of India. The new 4 per cent loan has been very popular both within and outside Mysore and had been quoted at a premium. Besides Government Securities and Shares of industrial companies, there are in the market the shares of a large number of concerns in which there are transactions from time to time. Owing to the want of a Stock



Exchange in a central place like Bangalore, the prices of all these stocks and shares and the transactions in them are largely controlled by the organized markets of Bombay and Madras. The value of the Mysore securities will be further enhanced in the near future if they are, as they are bound to be ere long, recognised as securities for purposes of investment outside the State. The Imperial Bank Act has been amended and the Government of India have been requested to take the necessary steps for the purpose. Thus the case for organizing a Share Market for Mysore is not only strong but also one calling for an early solution. I would, on behalf of the Chamber, request His Highness's Government to take early steps to bring about such a consummation. In fact, such a proposal was made by the Chamber as early as 1928. Action in this respect is therefore long overdue now. I would fain express the hope that ere long the Mysore State will be enabled to possess a share Market of its own.

#### NEW INDUSTRIAL REVIVAL IN MYSORE

Gentlemen, Mysore is growing into an industrial State, thanks to the forward industrial policy pursued by the Government of His Highness the Maharaja, whose interest in the industrial and commercial development of the State is beyond question. As is well known, we have had strikingly large undertakings in this State, besides strenuous attempts made to revivify cottage and home industries. In these and allied matters, during the past eight years, we have had a revival of an older policy of development that had for some unaccountable reasons received a checkmate. Thanks again to the persistent zeal and statesmanlike attitude of our present Dewan, a more enlightened industrial policy has once again been evolved. He has, let me add, furnished the copingstone to certain of the greater ventures of his predecessor in office, Sir M. Visvesvaraya. The sanctioning of the Irwin Canal and successful pushing through of the Steel Scheme we owe to the present Administration. Besides, being responsible for the working on a commercial basis of the Railways and Electric Departments, the Government of Mysore have been pioneers in various directions, as the result of which we have at present Government-owned and Government-managed industrial concerns. The Chamber sees increasing signs of a revived industrial policy which, it hopes, will mean the beginning of a new era in the industrialization of the State. The Director of Industries and his staff need not be allowed to absorb all their time in managing the concerns started by the Government. A careful re-examination of the position is bound to show that a new departure is now called for. It is time that the Government reviewed the whole position and endeavoured to initiate a revised policy under which some at least of the Government-pioneered industrial and trade concerns may be handed over to private parties, so that they might be further commercially developed in the larger interests of the country. The Chamber would note with satisfaction, in this connection, the very frank and notable utterances made both by Sir Mirza and the two Members of Council on this particular topic at the last session of the Mysore Legislative Council. It is clear that they are for allowing private trade its own field, unencumbered by Government competition. The relief that the Departmental Heads concerned would get by such a change of policy would, I think, be great, and the time, trouble and touring enterprise of these high officers would facilitate the further development of trade and industries in the State. Government and the people stand to gain by the adoption of this revised policy. Recently, the policy of the combining private enterprise with Government ownership and management has been happily inaugurated and is being successfully worked out in connection with the Mysore Sugar Factory. The Government have also helped big ventures when required, notably in case of the Sir Krishnarajendra Mills. Under their aegis, this undertaking is showing signs of revival. The Government's policy of rural electrification is bound to give a great fillip to the growth of Cottage Industries in the mofussil. In connection with the rural electrification project, a well considered scheme to interest private enterprise in the distribution of power is, I hear, under consideration. This is a step in the right direction and is bound to be welcomed by the public. In the greater industrialisation of the State will be found the ultimate cure for unemployment, which is so rife amidst us to-day. No nation has yet grown great by means of agriculture. That is but a truism, but it is necessary to stress it now because there is a tendency in certain quarters to decry industrial development in our land. Let me repeat that without further industrialisation and too to an extent that will make the country use its raw materials to at least 75 per cent of its production, the country has no future before it,



### ECONOMIC PLANNING IN MYSORE

This brings me to the subject of Economic Planning that is now in the air everywhere. That such a Planning is required in the larger interests of India few will gainsay. Where India may lead to-morrow, Mysore as before should forestall to-day. The increased industrialisation that is needed by us cannot be attained without a Plan and the time will soon come when we will have to fit into a larger self-governing nation. He gains who has the foresight to see. It is pleasing, therefore, to note that Planning has been definitely recognised by the Mysore State as a necessity, if the future of the country is to be assured on sound and workman-like lines. Sir Mirza M. Ismail, in the course of his Address to the Mysore Representative Assembly in June last, observed as follows :—

“You may ask me what part we in Mysore are going to play in these developments. My reply is that we had already gone a long way along the road of economic nationalism and economic self-sufficiency. We can generate all the power we need without going outside the limits of the State to buy coal and we are rapidly arriving at a stage when we shall be able to supply our own transformers and insulators as our own poles, whether of wood or iron. We can make our pipes and other iron materials, our own clothes, whether of cotton, wool or silk. We can wash ourselves with Mysore Soap, perfume ourselves with Mysore perfumes and ride on Mysore-bred horses. And I sincerely hope that, now that the Government of India are prepared to take up capital schemes that will pay them their way, there will be no more delay in putting in the missing link from Chamarajnagar to Satyamangalam to which we look for so much development of our markets and railway traffic. But economic self-sufficiency does not cover the whole ground. Economic planning is a thing that has to be tackled with one eye on our own production and the other on that of the rest of the world.....The first line of research that suggests itself is to examine the import statistics with a view to discovering what are the articles we buy from abroad which we might, with intensive working, produce at home.”

Patriotic sentiments these and full of rich potentialities for the future economic well-being of the State, coming as they do from the present head of the administration of the State whose zeal, enthusiasm and earnestness to develop the economic resources of Mysore to their fullest extent are so very well known. We are thus officially assured of a Planned Economy for Mysore.

### THE SALTER REPORT

I might perhaps add that those of you who have read Sir Arthur Salter's Report in this connection will realize how closely he has followed the lines of work rendered familiar to us by the Mysore Economic Conference. Sir Arthur's scheme seems in many parts repetition of what we have so long been accustomed to in regard to co-ordinating the work of all the Economic Department—Agriculture, Industries and Commerce, and Education,—appointment of Development Officials and Specialists, and bringing to bear expert advice on to non-official endeavours. The new industrial revival that is in the air will, let us hope, help towards a resuscitation, at least in part, of this old familiar scheme of ours. To begin with, let me express the hope that at least the Industries and Commerce Board will be revived, so that trade and commerce and industries as well may get all the assistance necessary to diversify the occupations in the land.

### THE IMMEDIATE NEEDS

In the immediate future, a step forward is needed in the Electrical line as also in connection with the Iron and Steel Scheme recently sanctioned by Government. As the supply of electrical energy is available in the State, there is need to manufacture several of the articles required in connection with its exploitation and use. Next, as regards the iron industry, it is necessary that we should endeavour to meet a great many of our iron and steel requirements, such as agricultural implements, popular domestic articles, pipes, rails, etc. Apart from these newer industries, I should like to refer to our older and better-established industries. As Mysore produces her own cotton, endeavour should be made to produce cloth sufficient enough at least to meet consumption within the State. From the climatic point of view, Mysore is admirably situated for the production of woollen fabrics. The sheep-breeding industry is an ancient industry in the State and it deserves to be developed on modern lines, so that a greater yield and finer qualities may be made available for commercializing this industry. Next the Sericultural industry

of the State is an important national industry of Mysore. Since we can supply nearly 50 per cent of the silk requirements of India from our outturn, there is need to give closer attention to it. There is no reason why Mysore should not make India self-sufficient in regard to her silk requirements. The home market should be fully developed. If properly organized and developed on a national scale, this industry is bound to be not only a prosperous one in the State, but also a source of profit to our silk-rearers and prove an important factor in the national economy of India as a whole.

#### THE MYSORE SUGAR INDUSTRY

I need not enlarge on the development that has occurred in connection with the Sugar Industry of Mysore. The development of the Sugar Industry at Mandya has given for the ryots of the Irwin Canal area the welcome chance of cultivating in their fields a commercial crop of great importance. Besides an assured market in the immediate neighbourhood, they have the satisfaction that they are helping in the national endeavour to make India manufacture her own sugar. Attempts have also been made to develop the by-products of the Mandya Factory so that the erst-while waste-products may be profitably utilized. Of course, care and caution will be needed in the years to come, if we are to guard against overproduction. The Government have, no doubt, taken steps to provide against this very real contingency. The Chamber would respectfully urge that local traders and commercialists should get the full benefit that increased local production of this much-coveted article of food implies. The closer association of local distributors is a direction in which action seems called for.

The Mandya Factory is an object lesson to both the Government and the people in one important particular. It has shown the way for effective mutual co-operation of the two for the economic development of the State. Mere Government enterprise without the active co-operation of those that can contribute their share towards its successful prosecution is apt to sap private enterprise and make the available capital among the people sterile. On the other hand, mere private enterprise, without State's active co-operation and help, is not possible in the case of an industry like sugar, at least in the present stage of our industrial development. Therefore the most effective policy of economic development for the present seems to be for the Government and the people to go hand in hand to develop the economic resources of the people and of the State—the Government to guide and develop on well-thought-out lines and to stand as a guarantee for the success of any industrial undertaking and the people to contribute a portion of the funds thus participating in its work and sharing in the profits derived from it. That way lies the road for the successful progress of the economic development of the State. From this point of view, the financing of the sugar industry has much to commend it.

#### OTHER LINES OF DEVELOPMENT

Then there are other lines of industrial development in the State for the future which ought to be considered in any scheme of Planned Economy. For instance, a successful Bhadravati, combined with electrical energy development at the Gersoppa Falls, would provide for a number of successful subsidiary industries. The Forests of Malnad are capable of yielding rich raw materials for such industries like the manufacture of matches on a wider scale, paper-making, pencil-making and the like. I also anticipate that eventually we can even secure from the Malnad forests the raw materials from which Artificial Silk is produced, thus providing the nucleus for a prosperous Mysore Rayon industry in our midst.

I do not think that I need say more under this head. I would only stress the fact that there is to-day and for a long time yet to come ample work for a revived Board of Industries, with the active aid of a re-organized Industries and Commerce Department in the State.

#### NEED FOR TELEPHONE EXPANSION

I would take this opportunity to urge once again the great need there is to meet the requirements of the trade of the City in the matter of the reduction of Telephone charges, with a view to making its use more extended than now. The question is an old one and we know how anxious Government are in this connection to meet the wishes of the trade. Perhaps a remedy would be easily found if Government viewed with favour the old suggestion of making the Telephone over to a private company which can put more money into it and, subject to certain

mutually advantageous and necessary conditions, work it on the basis of a public company on the limited liability basis. I fancy that a great many of the complaints now urged would disappear if such a system of management came into existence.

#### THE C. & M. STATION RETROCESSION

There is one matter to which the Chamber should, as a Commercial body, refer on an occasion like this. It is the suggestion that has been put forward in connection with the Retrocession of the C. and M. Station area. I have no desire to enter into the political aspects of this subject. I only wish to point out to our brethren in the Station area that Retrocession, instead of hindering trade and preventing the development of Bangalore, is bound to increase the amenities necessary for a further big step forward in the expansion of its trade. May I assure them that Retrocession will open new fields to traders who have their business offices just beyond Her Majesty Queen-Empress Victoria's Statue? We have lived and worked and traded as neighbours. Why not we work further under a unified administration, which must mean greater strength and greater profit all round? Trade and impediments go ill together. Unity is strength, as between those who combine or wish to work together against the disabilities they may both be labouring under. Our suggestion to our friends across the border is: "Come and prosper, for prosperity awaits you in abundance. Trust not pessimists, who mean no good."

#### THE RESERVE BANK SCHEME

There is one topic, Gentlemen, that I needs must refer to before concluding my remarks. This is a large subject, affecting the interests not only of Mysore as an Indian State but of all Indian States, large and small. The newly enacted Reserve Bank Act has dealt rather unkindly with Indian States as a class. Though subjects of Indian States and individual banks in Indian States come under the Scheme as contemplated in it, it has practically left the Indian States to themselves. If Indian India is required for a Political Federation, is it out of place in a Banking Federation? The matter is one requiring the closest attention at the hands of statesmen belonging to Indian States. People in the States should help their Governments in pushing forward this important matter.

#### THE CHAMBER'S WORK

The Chamber has been in existence for 18 years now and it has done its little to help trade and commerce in the State. If it has not done anything, at least it can claim it has been vigilant. Eternal vigilance is the price we have to pay for political and commercial progress. That vigilance pays can be easily seen from this year's Report. We have had the moral support of Government so far; and to-day we have actual evidence of something more than mere verbal sympathy. We have amidst us Government itself—in its corporeal character. This makes to-day a red-letter day in the annals of our annual gatherings.

Gentlemen, I have done. It remains only to thank the past year's Committee for the work it has achieved, despite many difficulties. I hope to see a great many of those composing it to come into the new one elected to-day, so that the steady work of the Chamber may be assured. Still we want new members and I hope there will be a good blend of the old and new wines. I must not omit to mention publicly and acknowledge equally publicly my personal indebtedness and that of the Committee for the hard work put in by our energetic and active Secretary Mr. K. Shama Iyer. By his assiduity, application and appropriate suggestion, he has made himself ever useful to the Committee.

Before concluding, it is my duty to convey the heart-felt thankfulness of the Chamber for your finding time to accept our invitation, Sir, in the midst of your multifarious and pressing public duties. That you should have done so is an additional proof of your deep and abiding personal interest in everything conducive to the trade, commerce and industries of the State. On behalf of the Chamber and on my own behalf, I thank you, Sir, and the members of the Council very warmly for the honour done us and through us the commercial and industrial community of the State to-day. Let me express the added hope that this will help to open a new era in the annals of this Chamber. Gentlemen, I may, with your permission, state that we have got six Mercantile Bodies affiliated from all parts of the State. We feel we can legitimately claim a representative

character for the Chamber, so far as the interests of trade, commerce and industries are concerned in the State. It is entirely gratifying to us that our importance has been recognized by you, Sir, and you have been pleased to honour our Annual Gathering to-day. We would fain utter the hope that this further expression of sympathy with and co-operation in the work of the Chamber will become a regular feature of our Annual General Meetings.

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## The Indian Chambers of Commerce Federation

### Chambers Verdict on J. P. C. Report

The Committee of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry held a prolonged sitting at New Delhi on the 20th. December 1934 and concluded the consideration of their agenda after ten hour's sitting. A great deal of their time was spent in discussing their views on the J. P. C. Report and ultimately the following statement on the constitutional scheme was adopted by the committee and issued to the Press :—

The Committee of the Federation, after giving the most serious consideration to the J. P. C. report, have come to the definite conclusion that the recommendations fall far short of the demand of all classes of political opinion in the country and that they are even more reactionary than the proposals contained in the White Paper. The special effort made by the J. P. C. in adding to the list of safeguards and special responsibilities, which breathe a complete distrust of Indians in the management of their own affairs and their decisive refusal to accept even the modifications suggested by the Joint Memorandum of the British Indian Delegation, have resulted in making their recommendations entirely unacceptable to the Indian mercantile community as a satisfactory basis for this country's march towards the goal of complete political responsibility.

The Committee are not surprised at the universal condemnation of the report from every corner of the country and, though fully alive to the numerous deficiencies in the various recommendations of the J. P. C. report which effectively checkmate the attainment by the country of real political power, the Committee would confine their attention to only that section of the report which directly affects the conditions bearing upon the economic uplift of this country.

#### SAFEGUARDS

(i) The safeguards are unduly rigid, and in the sphere of special responsibility, very wide powers are conferred on the Governors and the Governor-General. Instruments of Instruction and powers granted at discretion are likely to bring Ministers into clash with Governors and the Governor-General in their day-to-day administration, thus making harmonious relations between Government and the legislature impossible.

#### MOCK FINANCIAL AUTONOMY

(2) Though there is no ostensible grant of responsibility in regard to finance both in the centre as well as in the provinces, in actual practice the power transferred becomes illusory in view of the unduly large proportion of expenditure being made non-votable and in view of the powers of certification and appropriation vested in Governors and the Governor-General. It is particularly significant that even on the data admitted by the J. P. C. as much as 85 per cent of the total expenditure out of the taxable revenue at the centre would be non-votable. Thus financial responsibility, transferred at the centre, in actual working will amount to less than one-sixth of the revenues collected by the Central Government.

The shadowy nature of the financial power that is supposed to be transferred is further exposed by the restrictions in regard to the inability of the Central Legis-



lature to amend any section of the Reserved Bank Act or amend any law pertaining to currency and coinage without the previous consent of the Government.

#### ECONOMIC HELPLESSNESS

(3) Finance Ministers will find themselves helpless to carry out any possible retrenchment in view of the comparatively narrow field of expenditure entrusted to them, and also because of the special powers vested in Governors and the Governor-General, to release money for the purpose improving the economic conditions of the people. That it will not be possible for them to strengthen their resources by the imposition of increased and fresh taxation is self-evident in the face of the distressing poverty of the people.

(4) The development of Industries may be greatly retarded by laying down as the special responsibility of the Governor-General "the prevention of measures, legislative or administrative, which would subject British goods imported into India from the United Kingdom to discriminatory or penal treatment." Covered by this, the special responsibility includes both direct discrimination (whether by means of differential tariff rates or by means of differential restriction on imports) and indirect discrimination by means of differential treatment of various types of products. The Minister may thus be constantly interfered with in his tariff policy or in the preparation of specifications.

#### RULE OF BRITISH INTERESTS

(5) While the Committee are not against an efficient and strong executive in principle, in the present condition of India with reservation of Defence and special powers in the hands of the Governor-General, a strong executive can only mean powerful domination by British interests. This position can only be corrected by a substantial Indianisation of the Services, Civil and military, wherefor no adequate or effective provision appears to be made.

In this connection the committee must protest emphatically against the continued recruitment to the All-India Services by the Secretary of State, as they believe that transfer of responsibility to Ministers is entirely incompatible with a denial to the Ministers of powers to appoint their own servants.

(6) It is feared that Ministers will be squeezed between the Governor-General and Governor's counsellors on the one hand and the All-India Services on the other and will be handicapped in framing or carrying out any bold policy for the economic uplift of the people.

#### ABUSE OF POWER

(7) While the Indian mercantile community is definitely committed against discrimination on purely racial grounds, the recommendations in the J. P. C. report are of such a comprehensive and sweeping character as are likely to cause abuse of power to the serious detriment of this country's industrial and commercial development. The acceptance of the recommendations of the External Capital Committee is half-hearted and its potential benefit has been negated in advance by the recommendation that all companies incorporated in the United Kingdom and operating in India before the new constitutional proposals come into existence will be eligible for bounties or subsidies that may be granted by the future Government in support of Indian industries.

#### BAR TO SHIPPING

(8) The recommendations regarding shipping are in the opinion of the Committee particularly retrograde and are a calculated bar for ever to the development of the Indian Mercantile Marine. The Committee trust that with protestations frequently made by the Government of India to lend all their weight and influence to the development of the Indian Mercantile Marine, the Government will see that these recommendations are not accepted by his Majesty's Government.

(9) The J. P. C. claim in support of their recommendations that they contain seeds of growth. The Committee have searched in vain to find any provision which would ensure automatic evolution. In this connection the Committee would particularly point out the omission of a definition of the political objective of this country which, though officially it was hitherto declared to be Dominion Status, appears now to be deliberately gloated over by the J. P. C.



(10) While so much emphasis is laid on the provision of safe-guards not a single safe-guard is provided against the abuse of the so-called safe-guards themselves.

#### POSITION OF BURMA

(11) The Committee are gravely perturbed by the recommendations of the J. P. C. in regard to the future position of Burma when it is separated from India. The Committee cannot help feeling that the spirit in which these proposals have been conceived betrays an utter lack of impartiality on the part of the J. P. C. in acting as the arbiter of the supposed conflicting interests of Burma and India. The punctilious care and faithful devotion with which the J. P. C. have sought to safe-guard the interest of the United Kingdom in Burma find a tragic contrast in the levity and light-heartedness with which the interests of India are sought to be sacrificed in their anxiety to protect and promote the interests of Great Britain in Burma.

#### BAN ON INDIANS

The denial of unrestricted right of entry into Burma to Indians on the indefensible scope of protecting Burman labour against cheap Indian labour is an ill-conceived attempt to make Burma a close preserve for the Britishers to the exclusion of Indians. The Committee also take strong exception to the entirely unjustified aspersions cast on Indian Chettians who have always had a large stake in the development of Burmans' present economic position and would have expected the J. P. C. to protect their interest in future rather than make them and their matters of business an excuse for gorging restrictions on the right of Indians to reside and trade freely in Burma. The Committee take of the suggestion of the J. P. C. that the operation of safeguards regarding commercial discrimination, which are proposed to be embodied in the Indian Constitution Act, will cease to have effect as an and when a trade convention has been reached between India and Great Britain to the same effect.

#### J. P. C'S CRUDE WAY

The Committee are surprised that the J. P. C. have failed to appreciate its entire loss of grace in reaching an amicable arrangement between the two countries which is so eminently desirable when that convention had definitely to be at the dictations of Britishers with the only alternative left to this country in the absence of such a convention of statutory provisions recommended by the J. P. C. The Committee prefer not to make any alternative suggestion to the recommendation made by the J. P. C., as they are not oblivious of the impervious tendency of the present Government and Parliament, which appear to be determined to impose on this country a constitution based on the recommendations by the J. P. C., although it has been denounced as unacceptable by every section of political opinion in his country.

#### FULL OF DISTRUST

The Committee, however, cannot help pointing out that the commercial community attach more importance to the method of reform and the atmosphere necessary for success than to any measure of advance. The Committee agree with the authors of the report when they say in Para 22 that "the success of a constitution depends far more upon the manner and spirit of its work than upon its formal provisions. The Committee regret, however, to have to say that they do not find in the manner or spirit of the recommendations anything conducive to the establishment of peace and friendliness between the two countries which for the sake of the solidarity of the Empire, is so essential. The assumption of the White Paper and of the authors of the reports made in para 88 that "every endeavour will be made by those responsible for working the constitution to approach the administrative problems which will present themselves in the spirit of partners in a common enterprise" sounds like a hollow platitude in the present atmosphere. The commercial community in their experience have never known of a partner looking upon a brother partner with a spirit of distrust amounting to the hostility displayed in every section of the report. The way of distrust cannot be the way of partnership or of peace.

## The Federation Condemned Ottawa Trade Agreement

The Committee of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries issued the following statement in connection with the Indo-British Trade Negotiations from New Delhi dated the 21st. December 1934:—

"The Committee of the Federation for sometime past has been reading with increasing misgivings newspaper reports of a trade treaty being negotiated between the Government of India and the United Kingdom. They are alarmed by the latest report that an agreement has now been conclusively reached and may be officially announced any day. The Government of India have, inspite of repeated requests of the Committee, ignored their legitimate demand for taking the Indian commercial community into consultation in the process of negotiating such an agreement and they have no hesitation in declaring any arrangement reached between the Government of India and the United Kingdom, seeking to regulate trading conditions between the two countries and reached behind the back of the commercial community of India cannot but be dominated by powerful British interests to the prejudice of this country.

### LANCASHIRE DEMANDS

Whilst the Committee have no definite knowledge of the basis on which such an agreement is reported to have been reached, they have been very gravely perturbed by the demands included in the representation submitted by the Lancashire deputation that waited on the President of the Board of Trade in England on November 1934.

Their demands are—(a) that there should be a provision to the effect that import duties on United Kingdom cotton and artificial silk goods shall be lower than those applicable to the same goods from foreign countries and that the United Kingdom Government can arise with the Government of India the question of re-examining the levels of duty whenever they are able to show that these levels are unduly high; (c) that there should be a precise expression of these principles in the form of a definite stipulation of maximum rates of duty and minimum margins of preference.

### INDIAN INDUSTRY SUBJECTED

These demands, if conceded, can have the only effect of the industrial and commercial policy of this country being made subject at all times to the veto of the U. K. in so far as the development of any indigenous industry has, in the opinion of the U. K. Government, a prejudicial effect on British trade or industry. The acceptance of such demands, the Committee need hardly point out, is entirely incompatible with the supposed transfer of responsibility for regulating the future of the commercial and industrial policy of the country which is recommended by the J. P. C.

### EFFECT OF THE AGREEMENT

The conclusion of this agreement, in short, should amount to taking away in advance, that measure of fiscal autonomy which is claimed by the authors of the J. P. C. to follow from their recommendations. The Committee have consistently been opposed to the principle of Mody-Less Pact and they are aware of the Government's promise to Lancashire to implement this agreement at a later date. Assuming for the sake of argument that the Mody-Less Pact did not prejudicially affect the economic interest of this country, an agreement based on the above demands cannot by any stretch of the imagination be considered to follow from the terms of the Mody-Less Pact. The Mody-Less Pact, however, has proved to the painful experience of this country to be the thin end of the wedge in that it has enabled Lancashire to push further its unconscionable demands for its own selfish ends.

### INDIAN COMMERCE IGNORED

The Committee are not unaware of the claim usually advanced by the Government of India that arrangements of this character can only be reached between two Governments, but they must point out that it is nevertheless a practice for Governments to take into confidence the representatives of their commercial community

and to be guided by their advice. The Hon'ble Mr. Runciman, President, Board of Trade, has been reported throughout the process of these negotiations to have been in consultation with the commercial interests affected in the U. K.

#### MEANING OF HUSH-HUSH POLICY

The fact of the Government of India entirely ignoring the Indian Commercial community and of their entering into an agreement with the U. K, in such a manner at once demonstrates the present political helplessness of India and the determination of British Parliament to see that the economic interests of India are permanently subordinated to those of the U. K. The Committee also feel very strongly that on the eve of the inauguration of the new constitution, when every endeavour should have been made both by British Parliament and the Government of India to convince his country of the bonafides of British intentions to effect a real transfer of power which may be utilised for the economic amelioration of the poverty-stricken masses of this country, the imposition of an entirely indefensible trade agreement, vitally jeopardising the best economic interests of this country, will only accentuate the political dissatisfaction so widely prevalent in this country.

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### The Federation on Indo-Burma Trade Agreement

The following resolution was passed by the Committee of the Federation of Indian Chambers from New Delhi on the 20th. December 1934 :—

“The Committee of the Federation have heard with misgivings the reports that a Trade Convention on certain principles with regard to trade agreement is being reached between India and Burma to regulate trading connection between the two countries in future when Burma is separated.

“The Committee are convinced that a satisfactory regulation of trade connection between the two countries involves matters of vital interests to the community of India and are therefore of opinion that Government should forthwith take into consultation representatives of Indian trade and commerce in preparation of the Convention or Agreement, and that any Convention or Agreement so reached should be made subject to ratification by the Indian Legislature.

“The Committee approved of the line of memorandum to be submitted to the Government of India relating to the revision of the Indian Companies Act”.

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# **Educational Progress in India**

**July—December 1934**





# EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS IN INDIA

## The Bombay Muslim Educational Conference

The 17th session of the Bombay Muslim Educational Conference opened at the Faroon Hall, Poona on the 7th. September 1934 with Sir *Akbar Hydari* presiding. The following are extracts from the Presidential Address :—

The choice of Poona as the seat of this Conference is particularly happy ; for this historic stronghold of the Marathas is full of memories not only of their political power but also of their social and cultural intercourse with Muslims. Poona is now a great educational centre, and it is altogether appropriate that the Muslims of this part of India should assemble here to deliberate over their educational and social problems and attempt to solve them.

We must not let the strife of the Marathas with the Mughals in the North blind us to the fact that, for centuries, the Marathas had both close and cordial relations with the Muslims in the Deccan, and were indeed to the Muslim Rulers of the Deccan much what the Rajputs were to the Muslim Rulers of Hindustan. Under the Bahmani Sultans and, when their realm broke up, under the Sultans of Bijapur and Bidar, Ahmadnagar, Golconda, and Berar, Marathas were the mainstay of the Civil (Revenue) and Military services. Later, the influence of Muslim ideals and institutions is clearly seen in the Maratha policy and system of administration as exemplified under the Peshwas, the great Maratha Chieftains and their modern survivals. It is not without significance that Peshwa is a Persian word.

It is a fact worth mentioning—and I call your thoughtful attention to it very earnestly—that “religious” riots (nothing could be less religious !) of the kind that occurred recently in Bombay never took place in the days of the Muslim kings or under the Hindu kings or the Brahmin Peshwas. Indeed, there was no occasion for such riots. Mosques were respected under the rule of the Peshwas themselves. No music was played before mosques, and no kind of disrespect was ever shown to Muslim sacred places. I may mention also the response which the Muslim Emperor made to the religious feelings of Hindus in the Peshwas. At the request of Madhoji Sindhia the Mughal Emperor issued a Firman prohibiting cow-killing. Here I may refer incidentally also to His Exalted Highness’ Firman against cow-killing in Bakri Id.

Mutual ignorance as to each others history, literature and culture—and I may add ignorance in each party of us of the truth of our own history—is very largely responsible for the recent evil growth of feelings of estrangement and antipathy. A thoroughly impartial and scientific study of the history of India has yet to be made. I need not apologise to you for dwelling at such length upon these facts concerning communal relations in the past. I have done so partly because we are in Poona and such memories naturally arise here, but chiefly because the question how to preserve and foster Hindu-Muslim amity is the first and greatest of the problems which confront us here to-day. Until that problem has been solved satisfactorily there can be no security for our educational and social progress for we shall always be threatened with a relapse into barbarism, and there can be no real assurance of peaceful progress for us or for India. Even from the purely educational standpoint, the harm done by a bitterly communal outlook is so great as to poison the whole life of a community and prevent a proper scheme of education ever being framed.

It is imperative that the Muslims of this Presidency—not to speak of the rest of India—should view their special problems in this perspective and no other. A narrow communalism is unhealthy—nay, it is suicidal in the long run for it is sure eventually to ruin the very community which seeks to strengthen itself at the expense of other communities whose economic, political and social existence is inextricably bound up with its own. The part cannot with impunity make war upon the whole. On the other hand, we must seek to strengthen and fortify the part in the interest of the whole. We must do our best to heal the wounded limb. In order to rise to a position from which we can effectually help others, we must help ourselves. Self-help must be our motto for the present.

Now what are the special needs and problems of the Muslim community? I can dwell only on but a very few.

#### FORMATION OF CHARACTER

One of the basic aims of education is the formation of sound character. Every race and community has its own notions as to the exact kind of character which it is desirable for it to foster. To us Muslims, whose religion is all ethics, religious instruction appears a *sine qua non* of education from the point of view of character-building. Our ideal being to form fine Muslim character, remember I use Muslim here as throughout this Address in its true and real meaning of God's servant, we cannot conceive of such character without the inspiration, the support, and background of true and real Islam. But how are we to provide the requisite Islamic teaching?

The creation of segregate and special schools and colleges for giving Islamic tone and atmosphere to education may be desirable in many cases and in certain circumstances and times but is ultimately detrimental to inter-communal harmony and national growth, nor can it overcome the difficulties with regard to Muslims who reside in rural areas. The real solution, it seems to me, is for religious education to be provided for by private individuals and associations in institutions common to all. There is need of an enlightened agency for this work, possessing a thorough knowledge of modern scientific thought and of comparative religion. But mere theology without intense spiritual feeling and experience is only a dry husk, a lifeless thing, an encumbrance. It is only where true spirituality is found that religious tolerance can really exist. The saints of all religions are at one. It is only the sinners who would like to tear each other's eyes out. There is need for a school of modern and liberal theology in Islam. In a word, there is need of a religious revival. We must think of the present and the future, not merely brood over the past.

And, to secure greater solidarity, closer intercourse and better knowledge of our common heritage, our catholic culture, our true history and our high traditions, there is need of a common language. There is no doubt in my mind as to what that common language ought to be and will be. Urdu is already popular among non-Urdu speaking Muslims, and its popularity is growing rapidly. The growth of Urdu in the last two decades is phenomenal both in the spreading of the language and its literature. Urdu has three great virtues—brevity, catholicity and elasticity—and it is admirably fitted to become the vehicle of modern scientific thought.

There is need for a much greater advance in education. Indian Muslims, as a whole, are backward educationally. There is enormous wastage in the primary stage in spite of there being a higher percentage of pupils than in the case of other communities in that stage. I am strongly of opinion that we should begin to discourage, and must eventually make up our minds either to abolish or completely modernise, our special schools, our maktabas and madrasahs which tend to fall below the modern standard of effective mental training.

The relatively low percentages of Muslims in the secondary and higher stages of education are mainly due to poverty and the lack of just appreciation of the value and importance of higher education in the circumstances of the time. In order to remove this suicidal apathy, we must educate public opinion on this vital point. As means to that end may be suggested: (1) a liberal increase of scholarships, (2) a large employment of Muslim teachers, (3) the provision of seats for Muslim students in professional and technical colleges, and (4) an appeal to Muslim merchant communities, especially in Bombay, to regard education as having a cultural and not merely a utilitarian value.

In December 1925, when I had the privilege of delivering the Convocation Address before the Punjab University, I set forth in some detail my ideas as to the lines which our new system of education must follow, if it is to meet the requirements of the country and of the times effectively. I will not trouble you with all the details of the scheme which I then outlined nor with all the arguments which I adduced in support of it. I will only explain that, instead of the present three stages—Primary, Secondary (which includes the Middle School), and University, each of which is designed only as a preparation for the next, I said that there ought to be three distinct categories of education, each self-contained, each having a well-defined goal and especially adopted to the attainment of that goal, each an end in itself.

### ESSENTIAL EDUCATION

Instead of the present so-called Primary course, which has no goal whatever except to qualify small children for admission to the Middle School, we should have a course of Essential Education which should include all subjects of primary importance, subjects some knowledge of which is useful to every citizen of the State, whatever trade, calling or profession he may chose afterwards to follow, as tending to increased efficiency or better citizenship. In the stage the medium of instruction should be the student's mother-tongue. The Essential course would include most of the present Middle School course and a good deal of the present High School course. Any one who had completed that course would be an educated man or woman. These Essential or Real Primary schools should not be merely textbook-reading institutions. They should have also their practical side, teaching agriculture, gardening and cottage industries in the districts, arts and crafts in the city. The student who had completed the Essential course (which if well-planned, should not be of longer duration than five years) would either leave school altogether to take up some trade, industry, or occupation, for which the Essential course would be regarded as qualifying him; or he would transfer his studies to my second category of education, the Vocational High Schools, which will be established with a special view to actual requirements.

There is need for industrial and technical, business and Secretariat education—how great a need and how little realised by the great mass of the public I need not tell a gathering of educationists, least of all in Poona. Modern commerce, industry and administration have become so highly specialised and organised as to rank almost among the exact sciences. For success in them, special training is now absolutely necessary, if India is to make headway in administrative efficiency and against foreign competition. And then, there is that almost virgin field of profitable activity for men of education—the development of India's vast agricultural riches. These needs would be met by the Vocational Schools.

My third category, the University course, would have much greater significance and a much higher value than has the University course of to-day. But the University course in my scheme would be but a small part of the work of the University which would include, and give its seal and sanction to, the whole educational system. In France, the name University is given to the whole system of public education. So here the University would include all my three categories and would be in control of all three. Its brains would be less concentrated upon actual teaching. It would be much more of a thinking and an organising institution than it is to-day. It would tackle the unemployment problem and serve effectively the functions of an Employment Bureau in a scientific manner by having an organised statistical side, which would keep its authorities informed in what professions and callings there was an excess and in what a defect, somewhat on the lines on which the Government of India lay down figures of future recruitment to the services. It would see to it that the supply of candidates for a particular vocation or profession, whether in the lower posts through the Vocational or its higher posts through the University stage, or, for government service, did not in any year inordinately exceed the openings in its profession or vocation; which, in itself, would be a great and beneficial reform. It would also regulate the number of Vocational Schools and the number of the students in each of them to correspond with actual public requirements. And the limitation of its teaching functions would allow of much more research work in all faculties that can possibly be done under present conditions.

The problem of educated unemployment can only be solved by a large diversion at the end, first of the essential stage of the boys and then at the end of the secondary vocational stage of young men, into profitable and productive fields like trade and agriculture which, when explored, are vast enough to employ millions.

### FEMALE EDUCATION

Our greatest and most crying need at the moment, in my opinion, is the education of our girls and women. But this I must leave to be discussed by the ladies who will hold their own Conference in another part of this pandal.

Then there is adult education, the need for which, to my mind, is even more pressing than the primary or (as I prefer to call it) the essential education of our children. I can only here give expression to the strong faith in me that with right methods and the use of the latest invention at our disposal like the cinema and the

wireless, the adult population of this vast country, with a carefully planned, persistently followed programme, will soon be able to claim as being educated in the real sense of the term.

No great purpose has ever yet been achieved, no great revival of a people has ever been brought about, without collective and organised effort; and for this reason, the spirit of co-operation, which is truly Islamic, must be developed on a very much bigger scale than hitherto. There are great possibilities in the co-operative movement for the solution of most of our problems. The creation of co-operative societies for credit and non-credit purposes among Muslims is highly desirable. Along with educational advance we must have social and economic reconstruction, for the state of the Muslim community to-day in India is like that of a beautiful and stately ancient building which has been damaged by an earthquake much, but not irreparably. It requires to be cleared of rubbish and carefully restored, before it can appear in all its former majesty; it also requires certain readjustments before it can be fully serviceable at the present day. We require a powerful insistent, ceaseless propaganda for the purification of Moslem society by the removal of social evils and abuses, of senseless customs and ceremonies which unhappily prevail amongst us and most of which are altogether un-Islamic, of all uneconomic living. Does not the Quran condemn 'Israf' (extravagance) as one of the greatest sins?

An appeal should be made to Muslim landowners and merchant-princes for liberal endowments for educational and social purposes, on the lines of those established by men like Rockefeller, Carnegie and Cecil Rhodes. With such help I would advocate the organization of a large band of itinerant workers of enlightenment, capable of impressing and winning the multitude, whether by organised preaching or by writing and distributing gratis or at a nominal price a mass of pamphlet literature prepared in simple language.

Our Prophet never contemplated the existence of an ignorant Muslim—man or woman. How many ignorant Muslims, so-called, are there in India today? The Quran has given us laws by which the economic position of the great Islamic brotherhood is to be secured. Are those laws to-day obeyed by Indian Muslims? Islam gives definite legal rights to women. Do the vast majority of Indian Muslim women know that they have any rights? These are matters which no Muslim can afford to dismiss lightly. They are indeed religious questions, affecting, as they do, the life and soul of the community.

## The U. P. Secondary Education Conference

The 13th session of the U. P. Secondary Education Association Conference opened on the 14th. October 1934 at Allahabad in the Tooker Hall of the Ewing Christian College under the presidentship of *Dr Beni Prasad*, professor of civics and politics, University of Allahabad.

### Chairman's Speech

The proceedings of the conference opened with the *Bande Mataram* chorus after which *Dr. Narayan Prasad Asthana*, Chairman of the Reception Committee and the ex-president of the first session of the U. P. Secondary Education Association Conference, held in 1921, welcomed the delegates. In the course of his speech he said: 'The organization set up in 1921 has developed and now claims to be a truly representative body of those enjoined in secondary education throughout the length and breadth of this province. The resolutions which have been adopted at your annual conferences show your solicitude for improving that education and guiding it on the right lines. They also show that you are anxious to satisfy the needs of the public and wish to meet them half way in establishing secondary education on a strong footing. Some might criticise you that you are a body brought into existence with the selfish object of protecting your own interest, but this is hardly true. In my opinion any protection given to the teachers makes the education steadier and more efficient. The greater the fixity of tenure and the



freedom of the teachers from worldly care, the better will be the education they will impart. It is now, as in the past, the duty of the society or the State to provide efficient teachers for the instruction and guidance of our boys and girls. In our social programme there ought to be an item by the name of provision for teachers and it should be as great a charge upon the state revenues as the defence, for if one preserves the society from outside enemies, the other saves it from internal disintegration. If enough provision had been made for the teacher class and they had been promised fixity of tenure you would have found greater research in science and in arts, you would have found schools imparting more useful education and less unemployment in the educated class.

Recently there has been a good deal of agitation over the form of contract of the employment of teachers in private schools, published by the Government. The arbitration clause has come in for a good deal of criticism and the managers of schools have felt that it is an unwarranted interference with their powers of managing bodies. In my opinion the criticism is unjust. The clause is fair both to the employer and the employee. I for one recommend that this agitation should be given up and the clause should be welcomed.

Referring to the new scheme of re-organising the secondary education which the local Government have formulated and published for public opinion recently, Dr. Asthana said that the scheme was a bold one and introduced revolutionary changes in our accepted ideas and he felt that the scheme was worthy of support with some modifications. With these changes there should be change in the whole outlook and the system of instruction. It was a pitiable sight to see young boys laden with a number of books and note books wending their way to the school. 'Does the modern education consist in the number of books prescribed by the syllabus, in the multiplicity of subjects and maintaining a huge number of copy books and note-books? I am very doubtful if the efficiency of education has increased since the time I was a boy reading in a middle school. I had not to carry the same burden and yet I was well trained and knew every thing worth knowing for that particular class in which I was reading. Have you ever considered what economic burden is being placed on the parent of average means by your syllabuses and ever-changing books? Do you think that within the limited time at your disposal in the school, divided as it is into periods of 15 minutes or even 30 minutes, enough and efficient instruction can be imparted in the number of subjects prescribed? Is it not a fact that a private tutor at home has to be engaged by most parents, who are anxious to give a sound education to their children? If you feel that the burden on the young boys is heavy and that multiplicity of books and your subjects is a drawback, it is your duty to protest against this system. Compare your schools with the schools maintained for European boys, and you will at once find the difference. In the latter schools the student learns his lesson in the school itself and does not stand in need of private coaching. His evenings and nights are free, and there is no irksome burden upon his brain sapping his health and weakening in his eyesight from the very start. I believe that our present system is largely responsible for the shattered health and weak eyesight of so many of our young men. The care and worry arising out of an interminable succession of quarterly, half-yearly and yearly examinations in the junior classes and departmental examinations in the senior classes is responsible for the pale look and the glasses of our young men. Combined with this is the economic difficulty of getting enough nourishing food at home or even in the boarding houses. It is time that these questions should attract your attention and you should stand as one man in getting this system changed so that our young men coming out from the school may be more fitted for the world than they are now'.

#### Presidential Address

*Dr. Beni Prasad* then delivered his presidential address. The following is the text :—

A Conference, such as yours, is calculated to refresh our understanding of the basic principles of education, to serve as a form for the discussion of new theories and experiments and to guide opinion in regard to the specific problems which confront secondary education in India in general and in the United Provinces in particular. It is now superfluous to dilate on the abstract values of education as such but public opinion and government.



India have yet to understand the new perspective in which the whole problem of education has been placed by the advances in the physical and social sciences and the consequent changes in organisation, economic life and international contacts during the last one hundred and fifty years.

Every age requires a social philosophy of its own and education represents the practical working out of that philosophy. Essentially, education is growth development of personality, self-realization. It will be observed that economic progress on modern lines is impossible without a high level of universal education. Nothing else can develop the requisite degree of intelligence, machine-sense efficiency and capacity for organization or accustom the people to the requisite standard of life.

It is clear that a vast and intense campaign of education on the part of Government is more than urgent in India. Here the percentage of literacy is so low and that of secondary education so much lower, still that expansion is obviously the first item in an educational programme.

The situation calls for something like a Ten Year Plan which would aim at the rationalisation of agriculture, at industrialisation and improvement of transport and communication on the one hand and at the provision of compulsory education up to the age of fifteen or sixteen, of fullest facilities for further education for all, and of adult education and the establishment of libraries, museums, etc. on the other hand. It need scarcely be pointed out that the execution of such a plan requires a new concession of state-activity and administration in India energetic organisation of thought, a series of planning commissioners, a network of functional associations and advisory boards, legislation on minimum wages, maximum hours of work and condition of work, a balancing mass production with mass consumption and last but not least, a public opinion alert and informed with ideas. Along with economic amelioration, universal education would lift society out of the misery, ignorance and bickerings which are the lot of the vast majority to-day. The benefits of education can be rendered secure only by the universality of education. There is something tragic in the attempt of denominational organisations to cater for the educational needs of their own compatriots and to jostle with one another for larger grant-in-aid. Their object would be attained more quickly and thoroughly if they outgrew their narrow communalism and joined hands in one concerted agitation and endeavour for universal education.

Next to expansion the greatest need of education in India is that it should be brought into line with those principles which the modern advances in biology, psychology and pedagogy have established on a fairly secure basis.

The school is only one of the several associations to which its members belong and by which they are inevitably influenced. The danger which threatens the school is that its achievements may be neutralised by opposition from, or at least lack of cooperation from society at large. Those interested in the success of the school have to see to it that society as a whole and not merely sections thereof is enlightened and that it favours freedom of development. It is specially necessary to organise cooperation between the family and the school. Three practical measures may be suggested. Firstly, parental education should form a part of education after adolescence and should comprise a knowledge of child psychology. Secondly, nursery schools may be established wherever necessary for infants up to the age of seven. Thirdly, advisory boards of guardians should be associated with schools in villages and towns for the brokerage of ideas between the family and the school.

The curriculum should furnish room for what has been called 'learning by doing' and for the creativeness of the pupil. Workmanship is natural to childhood and aptitudes for special branches of it can be discovered and measured by the tests which experimental psychologists have devised during the last 40 years. According to his growing aptitudes, the pupil can be guided into proficiency in drawing, modelling, painting, pottery, weaving, carpentry etc, and in manipulating machines of various descriptions. Creative occupation would develop habits of observation and planning, of surmounting difficulties of reflection and determination. It is a mistake to rely on games and sermons alone for the development of moral qualities.

Throughout the school stage, the film, the stage and the museum can be used to accelerate and round off the process of learning and to make it more interesting. One of the urgent needs of Indian schooling is enrichment by the trial of new methods like the Dalton Plan, the Project Method and the Howard Plan. As a result, the school will equip the pupils with a far greater amount of knowledge, manual dexterity and all round training. Scientific methods of education, handled

by teachers who are trained psychologists and who command wide realms of knowledge can turn out youths far better equipped for the University or the technical institute and for life than we realize to-day.

It is obvious that the whole system of education must be so organized as to conserve the gains of secondary education and to make them the starting-point of further achievement. Secondary education must not only be linked to the University stage and higher technical instruction but should also be supplemented by full facilities for adult education. The latter, indeed, is doubly necessary in a country like India which has lagged woefully behind and which must, through intensive education, bring herself rapidly abreast of the times.

It is unscientific and unwise to draw a hard and fast distinction between liberal and vocational education. All secondary education should offer scope for the pupil's creativeness and that the natural instincts of workmanship should be trained into proficiency in art, handicraft or mechanics. Firstly, vocational education should never commence before the age of 15 or 16. Secondly, vocational education should not be divorced from an intimate knowledge of the sociological setting of the vocations in question. In the third place, the technical part of the education should not be so narrow as to incapacitate the pupil from adapting himself to possible future changes of technique.

Vocational education must be directed primarily towards mass production and large-scale organization of economic life.

Commenting in the light of these propositions the recent Government circular on the re-organization of secondary education in the province, it must, first of all, be emphasised that the facilities for secondary education be widened and not curtailed. Improved methods of instruction would render it feasible to curtail the present total duration of post-primary, primary and secondary stages by one year so that the tenth class would ordinarily be reached at the age at which the present ninth class is reached. If this is not possible for any reason, the present tenth class, usually reached about the age of 16, should continue to form the terminus of the school. The former course has the advantage of permitting the addition of a year to the intermediate or preferably the university stage. In either case, the vernacular should form the medium of instruction at school but a living foreign language should form part of the compulsory course in all schools whether urban or rural. After the school stage, a pupil may elect to join the present intermediate course in arts or science or join any of the three proposed categories of institutions viz. (1) agricultural, (2) industrial and (3) commercial, with a course extending for about three or four years.

In all schemes, stage and aspects of education the teacher plays a vital part. To a mastery of the subjects in which he has to guide the pupils, he must add a thorough grounding in psychology and a comprehension of the world environment in which the lot of us all is cast. Society and the State must assist him to attain to the requisite standard of knowledge, efficiency and force of character. His profession must be held in respect. His school must be equipped with a good library and laboratories. Within the general scheme of education, he must enjoy a measure of liberty of teaching, method and experiment. His remuneration must be enough to lift him above financial worry and he must command sufficient leisure to keep abreast of the advances in knowledge and method. He must be entitled to a year's leave in every ten years for a refresher's course in a training college or a university. He must enjoy adequate security of tenure.

Let us welcome the principle underlying the recent proposal of the Department of Public Instruction in these provinces which makes the dismissal or discharge of a teacher contingent on the findings of a tribunal. In partial modification of the procedure, however, it may be suggested that the tribunal should consist of (1) a nominee of the Managing Committee concerned (2) a nominee of the teacher concerned who may, if he likes, delegate the power of nomination to the executive committee of the U. P. Secondary Education and (3) a nominee of the Director of Public Instruction who shall not be an official of the department but shall be a judicial officer, or a public man or a vice-chancellor or professor of a University. The teacher's agreement should contain a proviso that the decision of such a tribunal of arbitration shall be final and that no suit shall lie in any civil court in respect of the matters decided by the tribunal.

In conclusion it may be permitted to touch briefly on the problem of unemployment which has prompted some recent proposals of educational reorganization. It is a

mockery to exhort educated young men, barring individual exceptions, to betake themselves to farming, handicrafts and petty trading as they are practised to-day in the country. Even if any large number of educated men did take to them in the present economy, they would only throw a corresponding number of the uneducated out of employment so that, from the wider national standpoint, the position will scarcely be better. Nor can technical education by itself solve the problem.

In any case let us remember that the problems with which we are confronted are vast and complex. They defy tinkering and superficial or symptomatic treatment. They call for large-scale thinking, large-scale planning and large-scale organization. They call for the mobilization of all the resources which modern knowledge has brought within the reach of man. Education in some form or other lies at the root of them all and its universalization up to the age of at least 15 or 16 has the first claim on the State exchequer, on public attention and on private charity.

## Compulsory Education for Girls

### GOVERNMENT ORDER ON U. P. REPORT

The Government of the United Provinces accepted the main recommendations of the Committee which had been appointed for introducing compulsory education among girls. In a resolution the Government said that the Report of the Committee constituted a helpful contribution toward the solution of some of the problems of compulsory primary education of girls and Government were glad to accept the main conclusions of the Committee.

The Committee consisted of Lady Srivastava, M. L. C., Begum Habibullah Sahiba, Miss E. C. Williams, Miss Jaikala Devi, Rai Bahadur Babu Vikramajit Singh, Syed Ali Zaheer, Mr. H. R. Harrop, (Rai Bahadur Raja Bisheshwar Dayal Seth and K. B. Haji Mahomed Obaidur Rahman Khan who were members but could not attend.)

The Government, in view of the difference of expressed opinions on the point, were unable finally to accept the conclusion that it is not desirable to encourage the employment of husband and wife in the same institution, and deferred any decision in the matter till more experience had been gained. Again, they were not prepared owing to the practical difficulties involved at present, to issue orders to the effect that in every new lower primary school to be opened under the compulsory education scheme, a headmistress, not a headmaster, should be put in charge. Further they did not consider it desirable that order should be passed giving inspectors and inspectresses power in all cases to condemn a building in which a primary school was held and to require the board concerned to move it to an approved building, but would further consider the question of giving them these powers in compulsory areas only.

#### The Recommendations

With these modifications Government proposed to give effect, within the limitations imposed by financial considerations to the recommendations of the Committee and the necessary steps to this end will be taken. The recommendations may be summarised as follows :—

The experiment of starting compulsory primary education for girls in rural areas should not be postponed but should begin as soon as possible.

Girls should not be required to walk long distances to schools.

No girl should be compelled to attend a co-educational school. All local board primary schools in compulsory areas, except those intended solely for girls, should be open for both boys and girls. Provision, separate from that of boys, should be made for all girls who do not wish to read in boys' schools.

Provision should be made at the rate of one teacher for every 35 girls enrolled, provided that there should be at least one teacher for every two classes.

In schools which are attended by both boys and girls, the board should be free to employ both men and women teachers.

Additions to the teaching staff for the purpose of introducing compulsory education for girls should be mainly of women teachers.

The qualifications required of women teachers should be those prescribed for district board schools under the district board educational rules.

Where men and women are employed in the same schools they should be given the rates of pay approved for men teachers.

When women teachers are employed in schools meant solely for girls, their pay for the purposes of Government grants, should not exceed Rs. 50 for V. T. C. No women teacher should be paid in a compulsory area less than Rs. 15 per month in a local board school meant solely for girls.

Full provision for teaching both Urdu and Hindi should be made in the compulsory area.

Preference for appointment should be given to women teachers who are qualified to teach both Urdu and Hindi.

For the purposes of Government grants provision should be included in any scheme of compulsion for one Khadima or Dai on Rs. 9 p. m. for every 45 girls enrolled. Local boards which desire to provide conveyances to bring girls to schools may do so, but Government grants for the purpose from provincial revenues should not be given except in so far as the cost of such conveyance is met by a reduction in the expenditure approved for Khadima and Dais.

For supervising the compulsory attendance of girls at schools grants from provincial revenues should at present be given for clerical and menial assistance only. No additions to the numbers of the attendance and assistance attendance officers already provided for boys should be necessary.

In each district or municipality, in which compulsory education is introduced, provision should be made, and taking into account for the purposes of grants for provincial revenues, for a lady superintendent who will be responsible for compulsory education of girls and for the education of girls generally throughout the district or municipality.

Subject to the limitation that the girls should not be compelled to walk long distances to school, the number of new schools to be opened in connection with any scheme of compulsory education should be restricted and small schools should not be multiplied. A lower primary school should accommodate at least 120 scholars, a primary school for classes 3 and 4 only, at least 60 scholars, and a full primary school for 150-180 scholars.

Spacious, well-ventilated, well-lighted, dry, and sanitary buildings are essential and should be erected. The site for such buildings should be approved by the Health Officer and plans, specifications and the estimates by the Circle Inspectors before the work is put in hand. Compulsory education for girls may, however, begin in hired buildings but the boards should have their own buildings erected as soon as possible.

## The Punjab Women's Educational Conference

The annual meeting of the Central Punjab Women's Educational Conference was held on the 3rd. November 1934 in the Y. W. C. A. Hall, Lahore. There was a large gathering of ladies of all communities with *Mrs. A. Latifi*, wife of the Financial Commissioner, Punjab, in the chair. In the course of her presidential address, *Mrs. Latifi* said:

"I would urge you to continue the good fight against the many evil customs that are sapping the very life of the country. Among these are our extravagant habits particularly on occasions of marriages and funerals, which are responsible for much of the indebtedness not only among the poorer classes, but also among



the so-called rich. Above all, I would ask my sisters to rouse public opinion in favour of a more stringent administration of the Sarda Act. The passing of the Act was, after all, only a small step. The main thing is the enforcing of the Act and you know that Government cannot move in a matter of this kind without the strong backing of public opinion.

"As for female education, I need hardly remind you how miserably backward we still are. Only 12 women out of every thousand in the Punjab are literate. Our thanks are due to the Punjab Education Department for what they have done in this matter in spite of scanty resources, but a great deal more remains to be done."

Referring to the curricula taught to girls in Arts Colleges, Mrs. Latifi said: "It is a commonplace that the courses for boys are not well-devised even for the upbringing of boys. How then could these curricula be held suitable for Girls? It is, therefore, with great pleasure that I observe the efforts that the Punjab Educational authorities and particularly the Punjab University have recently made in this direction. The practical suggestion now before our University is that Domestic Science should be included in the science subjects and that a degree in Domestic Science be instituted according to the precedence of the B. Sc. Agriculture. This, however, is merely a small step—although it is in the right direction. After all, it is not every woman who needs to know as much Domestic Science, as is necessary for a lecturer on the subject. What I ask for is a course from the entranee up to the B. A. specially devised for girls and giving them instruction in such subjects as would fit them to be "captains of society", while fitting them at the same time to be good wives and good mothers. The training I have in view for women is analogous to the one given to men by certain courses in Oxford and Cambridge which are meant to prepare men not for any particular profession but to be "leaders". The B. A. degree, like the one I envisage for women, would include a good knowledge of English and the vernacular, also of modern history both of India and of Europe; the geography of the world and also such subjects as Hygiene, child psychology, civics, and social work. I would not eschew elementary economics, and would insist on music being one of the voluntary subjects for such a course. It is not my object to make B. A. degree for women easier than it is for men; only I want it to be so devised as to be more useful from the special point of women. My ideal for the Punjab is not merely a mass of primary-passed or even secondary-passed women, but an army of trained house-wives and mothers with well-trained captains who will drill and lend the rank and file. Every woman then would be a unit in the hierarchy for the service of the country.

"I would also urge you to take an active part in the promotion of cottage and home industries. Every educated woman, should, I think, learn a handicraft not only with the object of teaching it to her friends and dependents, but also with the object of raising the status of hand-work in the country. It should not be the fashion for well-to-do women to sit with folded hands in their homes. From the point of view both of the administration and of the people, it is essential that the wealth of the masses should be increased by providing them with industries subsidiary to agriculture and other primary occupations.

In conclusion, I would urge my sisters to start branches of our Conference at every district headquarters so that they might serve as centres for the spread of education and enlightenment in the darkest corners of our villages. Above all, do not dissipate your energies by undertaking too many things but concentrate on the promotion of the education of our girls and the spread of cottage and home industries".

### Resolution

After the delivery of the address various resolutions were put to the meeting and carried. The Conference emphatically supported the Bill for the suppression of immoral traffic in women and children now before the Punjab Legislative Council and called upon all members of the Provincial Councils as well as the Government of the Provinces to see to it that the Bill was such a measure as would effectively rid the Punjab of the evil.

Another resolution pertained to the rights of inheritance of women.



# The Madras Provincial Educational Conference

The 26th Session of the Madras Provincial Educational Conference was held on the 24th. December 1934 in the Ceded Districts College Hall, Anantapur which was gaily decorated for the occasion, under the presidency of Dr. J. H. Cousins. A large number of delegates from all parts of the presidency were present. In the course of his presidential address to the conference, Dr. Cousins said :—

There is a universal demand for the improvement of education in India. Any improvement is welcome, if it is an improvement. But we are asking for disappointment if we are innocent enough to expect any all-round advance from piecemeal rectification of errors.

While fragmentary improvements are being effected (I do not say they should not be), there is need for the constant influence on them of a clear understanding of educational ultimates, so that still further improvement may not be frustrated by the vested interests that congeal around all new manifestations of life to exploit them for their own benefit. If education knows what it has to deal with, and why, its knowledge will subtly work against the crystallising tendency that lurks in all human effort as poison lurks in the purest foods. The reality of education does not consist, I am convinced, in pedagogical generalisations or in the segregated particularities of heat-spots in the hand or deaf-spots in the tympanum in which so-called psychological research rejoices. Such matters may be useful in scientific research that has no need of hurry ; but if they obscure interest in the immediate and clamant needs for the living synthesis which demands education as its inalienable birthright, they are not helps but hindrances. We need true educational generalizations, of course, as time-saving pointers to true educational action, as law arising out of life, not theories concocted in a laboratory. Such life is not an amorphous vapour. It is an energy that expresses itself through forms, and with special qualities and characteristics through the telescoped and interfused human forms of body, mind, feeling and intuition. In getting at the root of the individual we are getting also at the root of humanity for the essential needs of one human being are the essential needs of all human beings. In touching life in human embodiment, we touch the paradox of life, that the particular is the general. Understanding this we shall not run the risk of not seeing the wood for the trees or the trees for the wood.

This may sound sufficiently vague to be mistaken for high philosophy instead of educational commonsense. In effect it comes to this : that the centre of education is the student, and that until the educational system of any country is pivoted on that centre its movement will be neither orderly nor progressive. The individual demands education in order to experience the full use and joy of his and her powers. To help the student towards that experience is the purpose of education and the work of the teacher from the point of view of the individual. But such use and enjoyment of developed powers can only be experienced in interaction with the individual's environment, human and natural. In this respect education becomes a social responsibility to be fostered and supported by Government as the executives of the needs of the nation or province, supported not on the basis of some grant-in-aid code or a fifty : fifty calculation of expenditure but completely and according to educational necessity ; and the teacher is called upon to be no more pedagogue, but an informed, alert, intelligent human being, as sensitive to the events and trends in the life of the world as to the growing faculties of the individuals who will in due time mould these events and modify those trends.

## EDUCATION—CULTURAL AND VOCATIONAL

In the sense of individual development education is cultural. In the sense of social interaction education is always vocational, even if in rare cases of hereditary independence, the vocation is to do nothing in particular, but to do it in an educated manner—a much more difficult task than to do *something*. The organization and paraphernalia of education are therefore the instruments by means of which the individual life finds its place in the group life. What is wrong with education in India and elsewhere is due mainly to the fact that educational autho-

rities, even teachers themselves, have got so mixed up with the sensationalism of spurious modern 'progress' that they can find no time to put the truth of their truisms into practice. That is, indeed, what is the matter with the world at large. In its frenzied hunt for something new (a hunt which is itself not now in human history) it has no time to waste on the practice of the truisms of Lord Krishna or Lord Christ or Lord Mahomed, any two or three of which carried to their utmost application, would have saved humanity from its present inhuman predicament.

### THE PROBLEM OF LANGUAGE

One of the first essentials of individual education, both as regards the receiving of information and the expressing of thought and feeling, is a command of language. Such language must naturally be that into which the individual has been born.

The situation to-day is that education in India is dominated by a language which, aside from its own unique qualities and immortal achievements, has little or no affinity with the vocal physiology, the temperament, the tradition or the attitude to life of any of the peoples of India. In the century of its domination English has ruined the indigenous education and debased the traditional culture of India, by diverting the stream of creative literary energy into foreign channels, and has held back even the development of westernized education by reason of its unsuitability and difficulty, by reason also of the wrong methods of its teaching. And now nemesis is overtaking it in a rapid degeneration, noted all over India, which is reducing English to gibberish even among students in the higher college classes. The situation calls for two reforms : the complete vernacularization of Indian education from Montessori to M. A. and a drastic change in the teaching of English as a cultural accessory in Indian education if it is to be saved in India from the fate that overtook it on the coast of China where it degenerated into pidgin English.

Difficulties will naturally arise in making the student's mother-tongue the medium of his and her education but these will concern only a microscopic number in the vast mass of the at present illiterate population (90 per cent of the total) to whose cultural enfranchisement an equal percentage of our solicitude should go, for on their liberation into possession and use of their incalculable riches of intelligence, imagination and skill depends the future wealth, happiness and peace of the country, not on the artificial eminence of the alleged educated few.

### THE PLACE AND TEACHING OF ENGLISH

In the matter of the teaching of English there is now, happily, a movement towards improvement in the University consciousness, the fulfilment of which is being anticipated by modifications in English teaching in the schools. But Universities do not give obvious or immediate answers : it would be *infra dignitatem*. The University of Madras began a tournament of academical ring-tennis between Syndicate, Senate, Academic Council, Board of Studies, Committee and Sub-Committee and back again. The result of the game is not yet clear : but it looks as if, with the beginning of the academical year of 1936-37, six years after the query of the Inter-University Board, the emphasis in English studies in B. A. College courses will be moved from textual knowledge to expressional accomplishment.

These improvements, if ultimately put into force, will not be final. They propose to leave the compulsory B. A. course as it is 'for the present'. Meanwhile we must go on through that forest of pompous and obsolete English, 'Comus' wasting precious time in pointing out to our students such essential banalities as the fact that we do not now say or write 'forsook', when we mean 'forsaken' and the like. The improvements will shift emphasis from knowledge to usage in both the B. A. and Intermediate classes. But this will not materially reduce the mugging-up madness, with all the dishonesty, that it tends to engender in both student and teacher in the artificial preparation of possible answers of examination conundrums.

### THE TEACHERS' DUTIES AND ANXIETIES

Let us turn to the social necessity in education, to the co-ordination of individual power with group life not here in the special relationship of vocation, but in intelligent and creative contact with the life in general.

Here, it seems to me, the chief needed improvement is in the capacity for the teacher to be the students' guide to the worthy things in life, and an interpreter of the obscure. But such necessary extra-curricular activity involves access to

sources of information, occasions, persons, places and materials outside the usual equipment of a school, mostly outside the limits of a small town; and these essentials to a true education call for expenditure beyond the ordinary resources of all but a few schools, and beyond the personal reach of a University graduate who happens to be employed in a Board School but untrained, since his salary is now officially fixed at twenty-five rupees a month—an amount for thirty days of living that would not give him a decent one-day funeral.

Next to the heart-breaking poverty of the vast mass of the people of India, with its reduction of the cultural possibilities of life, nothing appears to me to be more tragic in its insensitiveness to fundamental human need, or more menacing to the orderly evolution of Indian life towards the full development and wise direction of its incalculable potentialities than the position of financial anxiety and social humiliation through indebtedness in which many, I believe the majority, of the teachers of India find themselves.

### THE CHOICE BEFORE THE WORLD

On all sides of life humanity to-day is being tested as to whether its claims to have achieved civilisation in the occident or to have preserved spirituality in the orient are not empty pretensions. It would almost appear as if the assumed or real powers behind life were to-day offering humanity the choice of becoming human or of retrogressing into scientifically equipped animalism with powers of self-destruction infinitely beyond those of decent primitive savagery.

India is not outside the range of this test and choice. I trust I shall not be regarded as a mere pessimist when I express my belief that the falling away from the ideals and discipline of the Vedic dharma which is observable in India to-day will not be stopped by either precept or example. It is easier, at the present stage of human evolution, for an individual to run downhill than to climb uphill. The scale of values is still weighted on the side of the flesh.

As I see it, the only available normal agency for saving humanity from itself is education. India needs universal and free mass education. This ultimately means money, of course. It means a vast increase in the amount now contributed to education from public funds whose administration is in the hands of the various Governments. An amicable adjustment of relationship between India and Britain and between Indians and Indians is urgently needed in order to set free for educational purposes some at least of the immense sums of money now wasted through human folly (on "Military services", "civil administration" and police).

Much also could be done for education in India by private help. I recognise the princely benefactions of a number of Indians to education. But I am inclined to think that the holders of wealth in India do not take full advantage of the existing circumstances.

### ART IN EDUCATION

I turn now a few minutes to a matter with which my name has become almost monotonously associated for some years, a matter which, as I see it, deeply concerns the individual both as individual and social unit, and which has achieved black-type eminence in the published list of topics for discussion in this Conference, I mean art in education.

If art in education is looked on merely as an "accomplishment" or as an apprenticeship to a vocation, it will go nowhere in education and will take education nowhere, if I am a true judge.

The question we educators have to face is, I believe, is there any faculty-impulse in the human individual for which art-activity is the natural means of development? The only answer I have been able to find in thirty years and more of observation, thought, experiment and experience is, Yes: there is in the nature of every normal human being a capacity of expression which seeks fulfilment in the creation of object that may be enjoyed for their beauty and valued for their significance, though the fulfilment of the expressional impulse is not in the object but in its creation.

If the creative ferment in young life is not released into art-activity, it will release itself through sense-activity. The difference between the two is just the difference between sensuousness as Milton thought of it, and sensuality as we have it to-day in the world-wide orgy of physical gratification in unnecessary stimulants to artificially created or inordinately exaggerated appetites, and in the spurious

entertainments that force sensual gratification into the realm of the imagination where it becomes an infinitely intensified means of human degradation.

That, in a paragraph, is the primary cause of the difficulties of adolescence, and, though obscured in adult life by effects that become misread as causes, (secondary influences, racial, religious, national, economic), is also the primary cause of the stupid antagonisms that have brought the world to its present grossly inartistic state. Conversely, world order, while it may be approached by pacts, and by social economic system, can never, as far as I can see, become an established human habit until an education including art on the same level as the Three R's helped into existence a generation of young men and women so artistically minded that they will turn from the ugly things of life as naturally as their ancestors turn to them with increasing menace to-day.

The real purpose of art in education is not, I hold, to produce artists, but to give every human being the chance of becoming artistic; that is, of bringing into personal expression the qualities of unity, balance, harmony, intelligence, exaltation, rhythm, liberation, joy, peace, and of knowing the *ananda* (joy in creation) that accompanies them, and of carrying them by infection and contagion beneficently into group-life and world-life. Thus, as I see it, the matter of art in education has individual, local and world implications. Solve the problem thus in any area, however small, and you solve it for the planet.

#### EXAMINATION: TRUE AND FALSE

I shall now deal briefly with one point, but a crucial point in educational technique, that is, the much debated and, I think, generally condemned examination.

I do not myself condemn examination as such. But I do most heartily condemn examination as we have it in Indian education to-day, because it is not a true *reading of a balance*, which is the real meaning of the word (Latin, *examen*, the indicator of a balance) but is rather a laceration, almost a mental and emotional crucifixion, and in the preparation for it, is a promoter of deceit and lopsidedness and a depressant to personal rectitude and general cultural values.

In my college experience in Madanapalle from 1916 to 1918 I had to combat the vicious habit of dictating notes to students in anticipation of possible questions.

All the same, we cannot get away from the tendency in life to assess values. Every action we take and decision we make rests upon an instinctive scrutiny of things, not always a mind scrutiny, almost always a feeling scrutiny or a desired-scrutiny. And the passing of time brings occasions for balancing-up in order that we may realise our measure of progress from what we were towards what we wish to be, to do, or to have—and the greatest of these is to be.

Such periodical balancings-up are specially necessary during the rapid growth of the early years of life. They give the educator data for the modification of educative ways and means to the growing needs and capacities of the young student. At this stage mere knowledge-tests are unnecessary, even dangerous in their tendency to deflect attention and energy from the transport of capacity from stage to stage of accomplishment to the mere storage of other peoples' mental *samans*. Indeed, I question, if, save for special purposes technical and vocational, knowledge-tests have any place at any time in real cultural progress. Textual examination, as we have it in our official public examinations in the literary subjects, is educationally wrong if its aim is merely to find out what is remembered. Its evil can only be extirpated by its being made continuous; integral to the process of education, not imposed from outside; based on synthetical life-evaluations concurrently with short term subject tests. This calls for trust on the part of the educational authorities and impeccable probity on the part of managers, teachers and students. True education demands both.

#### EDUCATED UNEMPLOYMENT

It is not possible, in an address on education, to escape the topic of the destiny of the student; the question whether his or her developed powers are to find happy use, to the good of both individual and group, or whether developed student is to join the new sub-caste of India which, contrary to tradition, is recruited from all other castes and sub-castes, the new and menacing sub-caste of the Educated Unemployed. There are those who put the blame of unemployment among the educated on education. This, I think, is blaming the adjective for the sins of the substantive. The responsibility for educated unemployment rests on the employer who fails to employ available human power, not on the unwanted employee or his education,



good or bad. Here we are on the edge of large economic and social problems beyond the allowed "terms of reference" of a teachers' conference. Let us keep to the educational significance of the subject. Let us concede a certain amount of abstract blame for the principle that the sins of the fathers are visited by nature on the children. Taking the situation as it exists—the preparation of the individual for the service of life is in the hands of the teacher, and that service should without detriment to its cultural effect, be shaped by educational authorities towards the anticipated special service to which the student will ultimately be called.

The unintelligent practice of making education a department of State and leaving its conscious and potent products to the hazard of commercial fluctuations, inflations and depressions, entrenchments and consequent retrenchments, is only asking for trouble.

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## The Indian Philosophical Congress

The tenth session of the Indian Philosophical Congress commenced on the 20th. December 1934 under the auspices of the Andhra University in the convocation pavilion of the University at Waltair. A large number of delegates from various places attended. Dr. John MacKenzie of Bombay presided over the conference. Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Vice-Chancellor of the Andhra University, Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Congress welcomed the delegates to the Congress. In the course of his speech, he said :—

The moral, the economic and the political unrest which just now is world-wide in its manifestation requires us to consider and reflect on the first principles of social life and political organisation. The different problems flow together and cannot be kept separate. One cannot be a politician or an economist without a knowledge of the things of the mind. In a famous passage of the 7th book of Plato's Republic, the final stage of a perfect education is described as one where the youth has brought his piecemeal studies into a connected whole. For it is only, says Socrates, when you have attained to a *general* view of men and things that you become capable of asking and answering questions and of giving a real ground for what you think and believe. The problem of man himself, the human being never looked more threatening, more challenging than it does to-day in the eyes of serious people. Mechanical efficiency and scientific ruthlessness combined with a contemptuous disregard of such imponderables as are manifested by the spirits and will of man are to-day receiving our admiration. The position which was once held by philosophers and theologians is now in the hands of scientists and economists. Thousands of intelligent young men the world over are worshipping at their feet. Mechanised Utopias of cheap food and easy virtue like the proletarians' paradise of Lenin or the universe limited of H. G. Wells, if achieved, will be perfect like Orlando's mare: only they will have the one defect of being not alive. They will not contribute to the building up of human personality. Human beings are called upon, not only to live but to live well. They should have not only physical efficiency and intellectual power but delicacy of mind and beauty of soul. We are aghast when there is a famine for food in the land. A good deal of popular enthusiasm and press publicity is invoked and legislators get busy; but the more important famine of spirit passes unnoticed. If we could see minds and souls as vividly as we see bodies we would be appalled at their conditions in men and women belonging to civilised humanity. Many of the minds are of stunted growth, a good number distorted and crippled and quite a few definitely monstrous. When the leaders of thought and practice attempt to reconstruct society, they should be careful to eliminate this process of mangling and dwarfing of souls and help the development of the spirit in man. If, on the other hand, we neglect the 'soul' side of things and exaggerate the physical and the intellectual, we are doing a disservice to the civilisation which we are called upon to uphold and transmit. When the Greek civilisation fell, one of its philosophers lamented that a shapeless darkness overwhelmed her life. When the light of the soul is extinguished darkness of mind breeds animalism and



corruption. The tiger and the ass appear in men's faces and efface the divine signature. The flame of a candle may be a small thing but when it goes out, what a great darkness there is !

### LOST SOULS IN EMPTY UNIVERSE

Mussolini said the other day, "Many were the causes of the fall of the Roman Empire and perhaps they all could be reduced to this. The more an Empire gains in area, the more it loses in consistency and depth." Pilate expressed in a single sentence the failure of the Roman Empire to give the world a secure civilisation within whose compass mankind could live happily when he questioned, 'What is truth' ? The attempt of modern civilisation to answer that question has not been a great success. We do not know what truth is, what kind of world we are aiming at. We are a broken-minded generation without a world view or a passionate faith. Queen Victoria one day asked Disraeli what was his real religion. 'Madam', he replied, "I am the blank page between the Old Testament and the New." Oscar Wilde has a great short story which reads thus : 'Christ came to a white plain from a purple city and as He passed through the first street, he heard voices overhead and saw a young man lying drunk on a window sill and said, 'Why do you waste your soul in drunkenness, ? He said, 'Lord, I was a leper and you healed me. What else can I do' ? A little further through the town he saw a young man following a harlot and said, "Why do you dissolve your soul in debauchery" ? and the young man answered, "Lord, I was blind and you healed me ; what else can I do" ? At last in the middle of the city he saw an old man crouching, weeping upon the ground ; when he asked why he wept, the old man answered, "Lord, I was dead and you raised me into life, what else can I do but weep" ? Here the story ends. If Jesus should visit us to-day and find that we are comfort-minded and have taken to the worship of the most monstrous illusions like militant nationalism, and are pouring molten steel into the veins of innocent youth, that it may rise to undreamed of heights in mutual destruction and ask, "Why do you indulge, after so many centuries of civilisation, in human sacrifices on this colossal scale", our answer would be, "Lord, you gave us eyes but no sight ; you gave us brains but no soul ; you gave us science but no philosophy". We are an uprooted people with no vision, no co-ordinating outlook. There is chaos in the world outside because there is chaos in the world within. Madness, according to modern psychology, is disorder of the mind, and our minds are disordered. We are a mixture of enlightenment and superstition, of humane sentiments and savage habits of intellectual power and spiritual poverty. We do not believe or disbelieve. There is no central purpose in life, which will give us poise and dignity. When the physical supports and mental consolations are withdrawn, we look like lost souls foundering in an empty universe.

### THE PURPOSE OF PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of philosophy to-day is to restore the lost 'soul' to human life. Though India is not enlightened enough and is to a large extent sunk in superstition and still believes in demons, not complexes, spells, not statistics, destiny, not determinism, totem not race, it has not lost its faith in the free spirit of man which will have a chance for expression only when self-interest is subdued and emotions controlled. The historic mind of India is to-day undergoing silent and subtle but real and effective transformation. An old, vast and distinctive civilisation which for long was sufficient unto itself and was complacent about its culture is being born again. Facts and forces, inward and outward, sometimes profoundly alien to its fundamental spirit are forcing it into a new shape. At a time like this of vigorous national reconstruction and growth, when a people is blossoming forth into a spring time of hope, energy and achievement, there must be a philosophical renaissance as well. Philosophers and students of philosophy should address themselves to the task of leading this movement and giving a soul or a coherent vision to the new life stirring in us. It will be to this task that you will address yourselves in these three days and if the spirit of the old Buddhist teachers and philosophers, who belong to this part of the country, founders of religious sects like Vallabha and Nimbarka, metaphysical thinkers like Vidyaranya and logicians like Annambhatta, inspire you to a little extent, you will be able to face this task with courage and vision.

### The Presidential Address

In the course of his presidential address to the Congress, Prof. *John McKenzie* put forth a powerful plea for co-operation between scientists and philosophers in the great task of discovering truth. One has only to remind oneself of the work of men like Descartes and Galileo, Bacon and Locke, Leibnitz and Kant, he said, "to realise how close the association (between science and philosophy) was. And the association cannot be broken. If science is not allied with good philosophical thinking, it will be allied with unphilosophical dogmatism." The following are extracts from his address :

If philosophy be concerned with the most fundamental of all questions that can be asked regarding reality, it is not to be expected that these questions will always be capable of being answered in terms that will be intelligible to every idle reader. The study of philosophy requires no less persistent application and self-discipline than any other branch of human enquiry. I think I may take it that no member of this Congress has undertaken it from hedonistic motives, and yet I think many will agree that the study brings a rich reward.

Whether philosophy be charming or repellent, it is not possible to evade her, for she is concerned with questions which men have not conceived in moments of airy fancy, but which have persistently forced themselves upon them.

What the philosopher is out after is truth. This may seem a very unsatisfactory and inadequate statement, for it does not differentiate the philosopher from any other person who uses his mind. The historian is out after truth ; so is the scientist in every branch of science ; so is the ordinary workman in his conversation with his fellows ; so is the child in the unending questions which he puts to his elders. I think it is important that in the first instance we should realise that in a certain sense there is no differentiation. Truth is truth. There is not a historical truth, and a scientific truth, and a workman's truth, and a child's truth. It may be that for particular purposes or in particular conditions an answer may satisfy me as being true, which to another person or to a person in other circumstances would appear to be quite untrue. What has happened is that we have been given an answer that is relevant to a particular set of circumstances, but which no one would claim to be the whole truth on the subject. To answer fully even the simplest question is an infinite task.

Philosophy, in the true understanding of the word, begins when men have not merely taken to asking questions, and when they are no longer content with any kind of an answer, but when they have divined that behind all the diversity of the world there is unity, or at least coherence. The ancient Milesians became both scientists and philosophers when they set out to discover the first principle from which all things took their origin. We may not think that men like Thales and Anaximenes were great scientists and great philosophers—Thales with his theory of water and Anaximenes with his theory of air as the first principle. But they asked questions, and they set the direction of a movement that was to lead to Socrates and Plato and Aristotle, and that was to influence thought to our own day and for untold centuries to come. They sought the truth and the truth in its fulness. Others with their aid saw farther and deeper and more clearly but they so far as we know, were the first in Greece to seek for a principle of coherence among things and to suggest where it was to be found.

### GREEK PHILOSOPHY

The Greeks went on to discover many kinds of relations among facts. There is nothing in history till we come to our own times to equal the marvellous progress which they made in many branches of science—in mathematics and astronomy, in what we would call physics and chemistry, in biology and in medicine. And one of the most interesting things about them is that they did not allow all this variety of detail into the pursuit of which they were led, to divert them from the overmastering desire to see things as a whole, and to know the "why" as well as the "how" of things. I doubt whether in the history of human thought we have anything more significant than the account which Plato reports Socrates as giving of his own intellectual experience in the *Phaedo*. He tells of his disappointment with the older thinkers with their physical theories. He was delighted when he found that Anaxagoras held that mind was the disposer and cause of all, but was disillusioned when he went on to read his works for himself.

"What expectations I had formed, and how grievously was I disappointed. As I proceeded I found my philosopher altogether forsaking mind or any other principle of order, but having recourse to air and ether and water and other eccentricities. I wonder that they cannot distinguish the cause from the condition, which the many, feeling about in the dark, are always mistaking and misnaming."

This is a passage which is worthy of attention, because it reveals the fact that while the greatest Greek philosophy grew out of science, it transcended science in both the range and depth of its enquiries. The connection between science and philosophy continued to the great advantage of both. In Aristotle we have the phenomenon of a thinker who had mastered, extended and systematised all the knowledge of his time and who held it together in the unity of a philosophical system.

#### FRAGMENTATION OF KNOWLEDGE

In modern times it has been much more difficult to do this—indeed it has become impossible. We hear occasionally of a man possessed of encyclopaedic knowledge, but this is a comparative matter. No one now-a-days can know a fraction of what is to be known; even in any one of the more important branches of science the specialist does not profess to be cognisant of all that has been discovered in every part of his subject; he must be content with a more limited sphere. We have seen the process going on of the fragmentation of the field of knowledge—a process not unlike the fragmentation of the land which is so much deplored in some parts of India—and we have seen to each new plot a new name given, until few of us are able even to name all the sub-divisions which have been made among the sciences. It is not to be wondered at that many have lost sight of the whole in their absorption in the parts. Nor is it to be wondered at that there should be investigators who in the light of the sure results which they seem to have reached in their own department are suspicious of all attempts to reach a truth that is more fundamental and more comprehensive. They suspect that the philosopher is seeking a short and easy way to a goal which is to be reached not without dust and heat.

This is a misunderstanding of the task of the philosopher. There is no doubt that there have been thinkers who have erred through ignorance of the ways in which truth is being sought in the various fields of enquiry and of the result which are being reached. But the philosopher is not simply an encyclopaedist. The truth is not to be reached by piecing together bits of truth. If the philosopher be a wise man—a true "lover of wisdom"—he will never attempt to belittle the work of the empirical scientist. He will always regard him as an ally. But at the same time he will remind the scientists, if he needs reminding, that he has artificially isolated one aspect of reality for study and investigation, that even in regard to this, he is concerned with the "how" and not the "why", and that however important may be the principles which he discovers, they are not the whole of truth and they may not be used without rigorous examination and criticism in the building of the structure of truth.

#### LIMITATIONS OF SCIENTIFIC QUEST

In saying this I may have given the impression that the scientist is one person and the philosopher another and that the philosopher claims the right to keep a fatherly and paedagogic eye on the scientist. It is not really so. Much of the greatest philosophy has come from men who were also scientists, and these have been among the greatest of the scientists. Further, it is good to know that the greatest of our living scientists are fully aware that no particular science can give us "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth". The British physicists, Sir James Jeans and Sir Arthur Eddington, have in different ways given very striking expression to this. I am not concerned now with the particular philosophical views to which they have been led, but with the fact that in common with all the greatest scientists they have realised the limitations of their particular quest and the need of wider horizons.

#### SPIRIT OF PHILOSOPHY

This is an all too summary characterisation of the function of philosophy in relation to the search for truth by all the multitudinous ways which the human mind has taken. I have given no idea of the variety of problems which arise and have to be faced by the thinker who would be satisfied by nothing less than the truth. Philosophy is rather an attitude of mind than a programme of enquiry. The name itself means simply "love of wisdom", and historically it has been

common to call anyone who had the spirit of the intellectual enquirer a philosopher. The spirit of the philosopher is the spirit of the thinker who cannot rest in partial truths or in unproved or uncriticised assumptions, but who will always push his enquiry further. When that spirit is present and active there will arise the whole range of problem which have been subsumed under the general name of philosophy.

There are always people, even people of eminence, who would counsel us to keep to enquiries which give surer promise of results than metaphysical speculation does. But this is impossible. When once you have the question which Locke raised (in his Essay concerning Human Understanding) as to the abilities of man and the objects which his understanding is fitted to deal with, you cannot ignore it. You may give a hasty and a bad answer, or you may give thought to it and formulate a considered answer. But if you do the latter, you will find yourself faced with all the problems connected with God, the world and the self with which philosophy is concerned.

#### CONTENT OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT

I think it is probable that in a gathering like this the thought has by now arisen in some minds that I have been talking about philosophy from the purely Western point of view, and that I have failed to give due consideration to the fact that all philosophy has not followed the course which we see in ancient Greek and in modern European philosophy. It was not through oversight that I took this line. I have deliberately chosen to deal in the first place with the Western approach to the problems of philosophy, but I wish now to draw attention to the fact that it is not the only approach. The Indian approach has been different. The actual content of Indian philosophical thought is in many respects different. The presuppositions with which Indian thinkers have worked have been different. (Let no one in his pride imagine that even the greatest of Western philosophers has shaken himself free of all unproved assumptions). But the great problems of knowing and being, and the problems implicated with them, have been faced truly, as freely, and as fearlessly in India as in the West.

I feel it to be important to say this, because there have been philosophical thinkers of competence and even of eminence who have thrown doubt upon the truth of the statement that historically there has been any other approach to philosophy than that which we have seen in the West through Greek thought. The late Professor Burnet, for example, repeatedly asserted that all philosophy took its rise in Greece. I do not think that the latest historical scholarship give much support to the idea that Greek influences were of any determinative importance in early Indian philosophy. They were certainly absent in the earliest thinking which must be admitted to be philosophical.

Burnet's doctrine on the subject is bound up with the theory that the germ of philosophy can be found only in rational science. He admits that "the only Eastern people that can bear comparison with the Greeks in science and philosophy are the Indians", but he goes on to say that "no Indian scientific work and therefore nothing we count as philosophy, can be dated with probability before the time of Alexander". (Greek Philosophy, Part I p. 9.) He elsewhere says that "Indian science was demonstrably borrowed from Greece after the conquest of Alexander". I am not in a position to speak of the origins of Indian science, and I understand that the question is still open whether in regard to certain detailed points in philosophy, India was influenced by Greece or Greece by India. But as regards Indian philosophy in the essential lines on which it has been conceived there can be no doubt whatever. It is native to the soil of India, and it certainly did not spring from 'natural science'.

#### BASIC PRINCIPLE OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

There is, no doubt, a sense in which it may be justly claimed that philosophy is the offspring of science. It represents an intellectual quest, and in this, as we have seen, it agrees with science, and differs from such sphere of human experience as religion and morality and art. If we say that in India philosophy found its origin in religion, we must make it clear that by this we do not mean that philosophy may be simply an extension of religious experience, in the same way as we have found that in the West it is an extension of scientific enquiry. Science and religion as sources of philosophy do not stand on the same footing. Religion in India has been rather the soil in which philosophy has grown than the seed from which it has germinated. The analogy is not perfect, because



but for the cognitive element in religious experience, philosophical thought could not so directly have grown out of it. But what I wish to make clear is that in India it did originate under conditions radically different from those under which it originated in the West. It may indeed be said that in India as in Greece there was the endeavour to understand the world and man and the endeavour to discover the right way of life. But in these endeavours the thinkers of India did not begin with a study of the principles underlying the varied detail of the phenomenal world. They were moved by a profound sense that man's true good was not to be found in the phenomenal, and that the phenomenal itself was unsubstantial. The things of sense and of time were not the objects either of their study or of their desire. Enough for them to know that they were shadows; their business was with the Real. So they define the object of their search in such terms as these:—

"The Self which is free from sin, free from old age, from death and grief, from hunger and thirst, which desires nothing but what it ought to desire, and imagines nothing but what it ought to imagine, that it is which we must search out, that it is which we must try to understand. He who has searched out that Self and understands it, obtains all worlds and all desires." (Chand. Up. VIII, 7, 1).

There are probably people who would say that that is not philosophy, and there are perhaps people who would say that the great Upanishadic text, "*tat tvam asi*", is not philosophy. It is true that the writers of the Upanishads do not present us with closely reasoned philosophical arguments of the kind to which we are accustomed in Western philosophy, but they contain brilliant philosophical thinking and they are the fountain-head from which the great streams of Indian philosophical thought took their rise. I shall not pursue this thought further. It is to my mind a matter of profound interest that we should have in the West and in India these two approaches to the problems of philosophy, and it means a great enrichment of the thinking of the philosophical student in India that he should be in touch with the working of the minds of the great thinkers of East and West.

Both in India and the West philosophy was born out of the needs of the human spirit. It was an intellectual quest, but the intellect has usually sought more than her own satisfaction; or to put it more truly, what is sought in philosophy is the satisfaction not merely of the intellect but of the whole man.

#### VEDANTA AND WESTERN THOUGHT

We might find grounds in an examination of the thought of both Indian and Western thinkers for denying that this is universally true. In the *Theaetetus* Plato puts into the mouth of Socrates the words that "wonder is the feeling of a philosopher, and philosophy begins in wonder." There is one famous passage in the *Republic*, where he tells us that the philosopher is not merely a seeker after truth: he is a lover of truth and of all true being. For Plato philosophy was not a barely intellectual exercise. Aristotle may seem to hold a different point of view, for he adds to a similar statement to the effect that the earliest philosophers began to philosophise on account of wonder, the following words:—

"Since they philosophised in order to escape from ignorance, evidently they were pursuing science in order to know, and not from any utilitarian end.....As the man is free, we say, who exists for his own sake and not for another's, so we pursue this as the only free science, for it alone exists for its own sake." (Meta. 982b).

There is something here that is comparable with the thought of the Vedanta. Sankara thought of the goal of attainment as lying in knowledge: not simply of its being reached by means of knowledge, but of its consisting in knowledge. It is true there is a great difference between what Aristotle and what Sankara understood by knowledge. For Aristotle this knowledge at its highest means participation in that pure thought in which the being of God consists. But this thought is not the negation of discursive thought but its crown. With Sankara, on the other hand, the knowledge which is the goal is a knowledge in which relations are completely transcended. In so far as there is truth in the statement that in western thought intellectual satisfaction is the end of philosophy the same statement may be made with truth of Indian thought. But it is a very inadequate statement to make about the thought of either East or West. For with both Aristotle and Sankara the end is really the adjustment of the spirit of man to reality; it is not intellectual satisfaction in any narrow sense of the term.

I would urge that both in the East and in the West philosophy has had this close connection with life. There is no real divorce between philosophy and one's



practical needs. The enemy of philosophy both in India and in the West has not been the desire of man to reach a solution of the deepest problems of the universe which will bring satisfaction to his whole being. It has been the spirit which would not allow the mind to be inhibited in its pursuit of truth by the fact that a certain satisfaction has been found in conclusions reached after a partial survey of the ground.

### PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENTIFIC ENQUIRY

I can conceive that some of our friendly critics may offer the comment that in all that I have said so far I have made no attempt to show that philosophy really implements the claims that have been made for her. In particular, it is common for critics to point to the certainty of the results of scientific enquiry, and to the unanimity of scientists in recognising them, in contrast to the uncertainty of the theories of the philosophers and to the unending warfare waged against each other by the different schools. This is a case that can be very effectively put. The criticism would be completely devastating if science could be so liberated from all philosophical implications. The trouble is that the scientist is not merely a scientist; he is also a man. It is always difficult for the scientist to avoid ultimate questions. It has become no easier for him to do so with the increasing degree of specialisation among the sciences.

### CO-OPERATION BETWEEN SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

The scientist cannot free himself from the pressure of philosophical questions. They force themselves upon him and the choice is not between facing them and ignoring them, but it is between giving a hasty and ill-considered answer to them and taking pains to think out a satisfying answer. We may deplore the fact that with all their thinking, philosophers have not reached agreement on any of the profound questions with which they have concerned themselves. But there is still more confusion among the facile solutions offered by shallow thinkers. And philosophers of all schools continue to feel with Socrates that even the discovery of their own ignorance is no mean achievement.

It is one of the hopeful signs of the present time that leading scientists have been frankly facing the fact that they cannot evade philosophical problems. We are led to hope for a great strengthening of that co-operation between science and philosophy, which in the history of human thought and enquiry has been so fruitful. One has only to remind oneself of the work of men like Descartes, Galileo, Bacon and Locke, Leibnitz and Kant, to realise how close the association was. And the association cannot be broken. If science is not allied with good philosophical thinking, it will be allied with unphilosophical dogmatism.

One is conscious in these days of widespread desire on the side of the scientists as well as on that of the philosophers for the strengthening of the association. It is unfortunate that our courses of studies should have become so highly specialised that many students are condemned to the study of fragments of the whole of reality, and never have their attention directed even to the fact that they are fragments. A teacher of philosophy who suggested that philosophy should find some place in the curriculum of every student of science would probably be regarded as a crank. There can be no doubt (however), that one of the greatest of our needs at the present time is for an education that will enable the student to see beyond the fragmentariness of the particular sciences, and according to his capacity, to apprehend the whole.

### DUTY OF A PHILOSOPHER

I have spoken perhaps as if this task here related only to scientific enquiry. I would remind you of what I said earlier in this paper of the fact that philosophy has originated not only from scientific enquiry. It has grown also apart from natural science out of the questionings to which religion has given rise. And I think it would not be difficult to show that at the present time there is a spiritual movement (in the stricter sense) that is no less significant for philosophy than the scientific movement. The most outstanding scientists of the day are aware of it, and they are fully prepared to recognise that any true interpretation of reality must take account of experience in all its richness.

So the philosopher has to-day a place of as great importance as he has had at any time in history, and he has a task as great as ever was laid upon his prede-

cessors. It is not only knowledge that has been fragmented, so have the purposes of men. The philosopher's first business is to seek and teach the Truth as against all fragmentary truths. But the Truth is not something that subsists in cold isolation from life and indifference to the deeds and the destinies of those who live. We cannot so separate fact and value. I believe the philosopher raises to the full height of his high calling only as he realises that his function is not merely to harmonise all thought, but to point the way to the harmonising of all life.

### Reading of papers—2nd. day—21st. December 1934

The second day's proceedings of the Congress commenced with *Dr. John McKenzie*, President, in the chair.

*Mr. H. P. Maity*, President of the Psychology Section delivered an interesting address on modern researches in Psychology and how they have effected Philosophy as a whole.

*Mr. K. R. Srinivas Iyengar* spoke on "Religion and Ethics". Papers were then read on "The Place of God in the Advaita Vedanta".

#### NATURE OF GOD

*Mr. H. N. Raghavendrachar*, in his paper, stated that the conception of God in Advaita did not touch the problem at hand. The problem was about the origin of the individual and his relation to the world. It was to solve this that the question of God was taken up. The Advaita account of the Indeterminate negated the very problem. Nor did it justify the Upanishadic thought. The Upanishads had in view a real Isvara as the ground of a real world. But the Indeterminate had nothing to do with him. Nor was the position of Advaita really different from the doctrines that its founder wanted to refute. The world, as superimposed, was unreal. The Indeterminate was nothing. So the Advaitic position was not different from the Sunyavada. Cit was made the ground of all. So the position was not in substance different from the Vijnanavada. The world was traced to cit and acit. So the oneness of the ground was not attained. Advaita, with all its excellence was not free from inconsistencies, but without them it becomes Dvaita. Dvaita as philosophy was sound and it was the only proper Vedanta.

*Mr. P. P. S. Sastri*, in his paper, stated that in philosophy, as in religion, 'God' signified that Being from whom the Universe had its source; He is different from the world of finite intelligences as well as from the material world, though the degrees of differences vary in the two cases. God in some systems does not create the finite souls, as He creates the material world; and the soul in Advaita differs from God only as the reflection from the prototype. But God is called such only in so far as He is distinguished from the soul and considered to be in some relation to it. God is the conserve of life's goods and the comforter of life's sorrows. Any being that transcends happiness and misery, that does not recognise a distinct soul to be cheered and comforted, any undetermined Being that is called Absolute or Ultimate cannot be called God and it is so called in the Advaita system. The term most closely approximating to God is Iswara: there is a place for Iswara in Advaita. The Dwaitin had always resorted to the trick of setting up dummies and knocking them down.

#### "SELF-CREATED DELUSION OF PHILOSOPHERS"

*Mr. A. C. Mukherji* stated that the history of the battle between Advaita and its critics was mostly a history of what might be called the self-created delusion of philosophers; for, the encounter was not in reality so fierce as the battle cries would lead one to imagine. That relation and difference were inseparable from our knowledge, and consequently even the highest conceivable reality must be relational—this had never been denied by any type of absolutism. The really puzzling question was whether the highest reality of relational thought was in reality the highest. The puzzle had survived all attempts made, in Indian as well as Western thought, for a successful solution. That Reality was ultimately ultra-rational and consequently above all determinations, was the central thought of the Advaita philosophy. At the same time, it was clearly conscious of the relational character of all thinking and of all reasoning. It followed from these two positions that the ultra-relational was inconceivable for us. Yet, logical thought, according to it, being

an indispensable stage in the entire process of realising the ultra-relational Absolute, the unthinkable had to be brought under the conditions of thought by means of attributing to it what really could not belong to it; this was the necessity of superimposition. The Brahman, though absolutely distinction-less, was to be conceived as that to which belonged, as it were, the germ of all distinctions; and this might then be conceived as Maya, Sakti, or prakriti of the omniscient Lord. Thus, superimposition, which was but another name for accommodation to the conditions of discursive thought, occupied a prominent place in the Advaita method of stimulating thought to go beyond itself.

#### PAPERS ON INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

Sectional meetings then commenced at 1 p. m. In the Indian Philosophy Section which was presided over by Mahamahopadhyays *S. Kuppaswami Sastri* five papers were read. Mr. *D. M. Dutt*, in a paper on "Some difficulties of Sankhya System", stated that these presented themselves in connection with the theories of beginningless world and beginning of cycle, dissolution and conservation, transformation and plurality of selves. Mr. Dutt in another paper on "the main currents of contemporary Indian Philosophy" made a succinct review of contemporary philosophical activities in India, dealing with the beginning of modern philosophical studies, the influence of Christian Theology, gradual recognition of Indian Philosophy in regard to new problems and different lines of resolutions, and the philosophies of Radhakrishnan and Krishna Chandra Bhattacharya.

Mr. *T. R. Chintamani* read a paper on "The Philosophy of Parasarabhattar". Mr. *P. S. Naidu*, in his paper on "Redemption according to Lokacharya", gave the Vaishnava conception of God's love for and attitude towards the sinner, as expounded in Lokacharya's "Srivachanabhusanam", an important theological treatise written in Tamil, and compared it with the Christian conception. Mr. *S. N. L. Srivastava*, in his paper on "Advaitism in the light of modern thought", attempted a vindication of Advaitism through a criticism of neo-Hegelian Idealism.

#### PAPERS ON LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS

In the Logic and Metaphysics section, Miss *A. L. Haldar*, in her paper on "Bergsonian conception of Matter," stated that in Bergson's philosophy there was no consistent account of matter, and this was probably due to the fact that he approached the problem of matter from different angles. Mr. *R. V. Das*, in his paper on "What is a Proposition", said that propositions could not be regarded as possibilities or subsistent entities, that a true proposition was one with fact and that even in a false proposition, there were aspects of fact which were objective, though they did not constitute fact. Mr. *P. S. Naidu*, in his essay on "Locke and Critical Realism", said that some of the characteristic features of Critical Realism were traceable to Locke's Theory of Knowledge.

Mr. *B. S. Naik*, in his paper on "Epistemology of Illusion", said that the theory that the illusory was a non-cognitive construction (cf. Akhyatavada) was untenable, because it made illusion, double illusion and memory, especially memory of illusion, impossible. Mr. *T. R. V. Murti*, dealing with "Illusion as confusion of subjective functions", said that all analysis of illusion revealed three subjective functions, namely, (i) believing in a being independent of one's consciousness, (ii) having an appearance dependent on one's consciousness, and (iii) withdrawing belief from appearance. Each was complete in itself, though to engender illusion they were in complication, one of them serving as ground and the rest as matter. There were two kinds of matter, namely, absolutely indeterminate, and indeterminate due to complication (cf. Nirvisesa, and Anirvachaniya). The first was negative in that it was never realised as form, and the second was positive to the extent to which it was so realised, and it contained a demand and a warning—the demand that the form be realised in its absoluteness, and the warning that such realisation was not possible on the reflective level, though reflection pointed towards some higher stage.

Mr. *G. R. Malkani*, in his paper on "Some Reflections on the nature of Philosophic Truth", said that Philosophic Truth had its origin in scepticism, prescribed to facts and not vice versa, recognised the region of no facts, and was incapable of verification, there being no rational means of resolving difference between philosophers who disagreed.

#### PAPERS ON ETHICS AND SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

In the Ethics, Philosophy of Religion and Social Philosophy Section, Mr. *B. V. Ray* read a paper on "The conception of God in Leibnitz's Philosophy".

Mr. *Prahlad C. Divanji*, in his paper on "Can God be seen", said that by undergoing necessary Sadhana one can visualise God as a being who expresses Himself in a particular form ; or who creates, preserves and destroys the universe without expressing Himself in a particular form ; or who expresses himself in all the forms that constitute the universe. The question, however, ceased to exist when one realised that there was only one without a second, (ekamevadvititiyam) in which distinction between percipient and percept disappeared altogether.

Mr. *D. L. De* read a paper on "Ethical considerations of Mechanical Determinism." Mr. *M. S. Srinivasa Sarma*, in his paper on "Ethical Relativity and its bearing on Sittlichkeit," said that morality was man's social attitude and as such it was relative to conditions of society and was determined by sittlichkeit, continuity of which was essential to social solidarity. Progress was not destruction, but reconstruction of ideal in consonance with changed conditions, and that was what Dharma, as conceived in Hindu ethics, stood for.

#### PAPERS ON PSYCHOLOGY

In the Psychology Section, Mr. *G. Basu* read a paper on "The concept of wish in psycho-analysis." Mr. *Parsram* read one on "Freudian Psychology."

Mr. *S. C. Chatterji*, in his paper on "The Dividing Line between Perception and Inference", said that there was no hard and fast line of division between perception and inference from the point of view of psychology.

In the evening at 5-30 p. m. Dr. *M. V. Gopalaswami* addressed the general Conference on "Psychological Approach to Truth and Error." The lecture was illustrated by lantern slides.

#### Reading of papers—3rd. day—22nd. December 1934

The Congress re-assembled to-day with Sir *S. Radhakrishnan* in the chair, for the transaction of official business. It was decided that the next session of the Congress should be held at Calcutta under the auspices of the Calcutta University. Sir *S. Radhakrishnan* was re-elected President of the Working Committee and Messrs. *S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri* and *Haridas Bhattacharya* were re-elected Secretaries, Dr. *Saroj Das* was re-elected Librarian. The Congress then divided itself into sectional meetings.

In the Indian Philosophy Section, Mr. *M. V. V. K. Rangachari* read a paper on "The evolutionary implications of the Bhagavad Gita." He said that, according to Gita, life was governed by faith. The basis of faith was evolutionary betterment of race and individual. Evolution was rendered possible by availability by nature of diverse values. Vairagya was desisting from activities detrimental to evolution, and abhyasa was persisting in activities conducive to it. Mr. *H. M. Bhattacharya* read a paper on "The conception of Soul in the Nyaya System."

Dr. *Saileswar Sen* read a paper on "Appaiyadikshita's estimate of the controversy between the upholders of the Pratibimavada and the Avacchedavada."

In the Logic and Metaphysics Section, Mr. *P. G. Datta* read a paper on "The Dawn of a New Philosophy", in which he said that the conflict between Philosophy and commonsense and between theory and practice could be removed if Philosophy devoted itself to the task of showing that reality is known as it is.

Mr. *D. Londha* read a paper on the "Biocentric Philosophy of Ludwig Klages."

Mr. *P. K. Basu* in his paper on "The ideal and the Real" discussed the theories of Plato, Aristotle, Bergson, Sankara, Patanjali and others.

In the Psychology Section, Mr. *S. S. Jalota* read a paper on "The Mind and Body." In it he said that mind and body form one indivisible whole. The subject which is only another name for this whole is a psychosomatic organism. In one sense, mind may be called nothing but body, and in another sense body may be called nothing but mind. The senses are different, no doubt ; but the object is one and the same living Reality.

Mr. *S. Basu*, in his essay on "The Affective Nature of Sensory Qualities," criticised the current theories of sensation and supported the Affective continuum theory of sensory qualities.

Mr. *R. N. Ghosh* read an interesting paper on "Aesthetic Appreciation," in the course of which he held that standard of beauty and that aesthetic appreciation was determined by subjective attitude. The Congress then came to a close.



# The All India Educational Conference

The tenth session of the All India Educational Conference commenced its four days' session at New Delhi on the 27th. December 1934 under the presidency of *Thakur Chain Singh*, Senior Minister, Jodhpur State. In the course of his speech, the President said:—

## Presidential Address

"In view of the important constitutional developments impending, the extension and improvement of educational facilities assume a seriousness which we do not always realise with sufficient vividness. There is not much chance of modern democratic institutions being successful in this country unless we work at the same time for educational advancement of our people and produce democracy capable of understanding not only the privileges but also the responsibilities of citizenship".

The President acknowledged his election to the chair as symbolical of the growing realisation in the country that British India and the Indian States were ultimately connected with one another in most matters affecting national progress and particularly education, as it furnished a platform on which they should meet in a spirit of comradeship, intent on fighting the forces of ignorance with combined strength. He hoped when an All-India Federation materialised, they should have greater opportunities for such co-operation in important nation-building activities.

Discussing the educational problem, Thakur Chain Singh emphasised the inadequacy of the elementary and secondary educational system. The main problem was not so much its improvement as its spread, but reform could never be effected unless we are prepared to face the unpleasantness of extra taxation.

Concluding, Thakur Chain Singh discussed at length the activities of the Conference in various spheres and wished it all success in its endeavour.

## Welcome Address

Dr. Zakir Hussain, Principal, *Jamia Millia Islamia*, and Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcomed the delegates to historic Delhi, a city of great disappointments, of great successes and great failures, which watched with apparent unconcern the birth of empires and their annihilation.

Dr. Zakir Hussain said:—"Two changes will have to be introduced in the entire system of education from the bottom to the top. First of these is a change in the whole orientation of our education. If, as we have seen, the individual mind can be educated only by cultural goods adequate to its own structure, it is evident that cultural goods of the group to which one belongs, in which one is born and bred must be the best means of its development and culture. It is essential to Indianise our whole educational system. It is essential to put an end to the recruitment of young men to ranks of so-called educated who are blind to beauties of their own art, deaf to harmonies of their own name music, ashamed of their own language and literature, to whom all that is theirs is mean and ignoble, and all that is foreign is as such noble and sublime. It is essential to so change education as to render it possible that young men should be condemned to live as foreigners in their own land, unable to speak their own tongue and incapable of thinking their own thoughts, with borrowed speech, as the Poet has said, on their lips, with borrowed desires in their hearts. The second thing that will have to be done is to do everything to see that our schools give opportunities of practising what they preach. They should provide opportunities of strengthening the will in its passive forms, diligence, patience, perseverance and constancy, by insisting on thoroughness in work and in its active manifestations, moral courage and practical initiative by allowing as wide a field as possible of free activity to the pupils.

"If the political changes that are bound to come at no distant date are to be changes for the better, if the government of the people by the people is to prove to be government for the people, we shall have to set about the difficult task of changing our institutions of mere book learning into centres of co-operative activity where a sense of social and political responsibility could be engendered in the



*Captain J. W. Petavel* (Poona) on "Socialism, united communities and education",  
*Dr. Rambehari* (Delhi) on "Teaching of mathematics in schools and colleges, and  
*Dr. Aleem* (Aligarh) on "Some Thoughts on National Education."

#### PHYSICAL DETERIORATION OF STUDENTS

The problem of growing physical deterioration among the student community was discussed in an address delivered by *Mr. Brijlal* of Lahore at the Conference. He said that health generally depended on four factors, namely, heredity, proper feeding, assimilation and personal hygiene. In his opinion a highly developed intellect without physical fitness was ineffective. It was therefore essential that steps should be taken to check this growing deterioration and save the future generation from becoming—generation of sickly and spineless pigmies.

#### RE-CONSTRUCTION IN EDUCATION

*Prof. Dewan Singh Sharma* in his address on reconstruction in education said that many of the defects in the present system had been pointed out by educationists all over India, but the chief defect was (a kind of Rip Van Winklism. Rip Van Winkle was one of the most beloved characters created in fiction but he was misfit in his home and after he waked up from his trance he was a misfit in the public life of his country. In the same way our educational system was behind times by many years, if not generations, and thus it was out of touch with the political, economic, cultural, social and linguistic needs of the time. Politically India wanted an educated and intelligent electorate and dynamic leadership and there was much to be done to combat illiteracy and to arouse civil consciousness. India was mainly an agricultural country in which the present education was a misfit, resulting in colossal unemployment. Another great defect in our education was the inadequate provision for the study of vernaculars and the speaker advocated a common lingua franca.

#### EDUCATION IN DYNAMIC WORLD

The conception of education in the dynamic world and the role of teachers in educational renaissance was the theme of an address delivered by Principal *K. C. Saiyidan* of Aligarh Teachers' Training College. He discussed the new movements and forces which were operating at present nationally and internationally to reshape education throughout the world. Despite the development of the scientific movement in education, it was impossible to perfect a fool proof technique which teachers could use without use of their own intellectual initiative and creative thought. They could not, therefore, divest themselves of the responsibility not only to study their subjects of introduction and the psychology of children but also the social order amidst which they were living to-day. The developments associated with the growth of industrialism and scientific technology had added immeasurably to the material and intellectual power of man but they had at the same time created a grave psychological and ethical situation because of the failure of man's social and moral consciousness to adapt itself to the changed conditions. This had resulted in the present situation with its wars and exploitation, its social and economic injustices, its unbridled lust for power and wealth, its conflict of values and loyalties in individual and collective life. It was this problem which teachers and educationists had to tackle. If they approached it in a right spirit this stupendous task of creating a new and better world by exalting in school work co-operation above competition, creation about acquisitiveness, service above lust for power, profit and active intelligence about passive assimilation of second-hand opinions the teachers would not only enrich the lives of their pupils but also train disciplined workers and leaders in the cause for better social order.

#### Sir G. Anderson's Address

*Sir George Anderson*, Educational Commissioner with the Government of India, in addressing the Conference, said :—

One of the striking features of the times is the increasing attention now paid to the problems of education. This is largely due, no doubt, to the fact that, as the Education Member has suggested, we are passing through an age of transition, that we are gripped by rapidly changing conditions of life, that there is urgent demand for adapting our educational structure to the new requirements, to new

conditions ; and this demand is growing in intensity. Even convocation addresses instead of comprising somewhat platitudinous advice to the recipients of degrees, nowadays take often the form of caustic diatribes against the present system of education and of eloquent and persuasive appeals for its reconstruction.

It may be that I have myself contributed towards this spirit of pessimism ; my excuse for pessimism is that I believe in frankness, as it is only by a realization of defects and difficulties that they can eventually be overcome. It may be, however, that some of us, in our eagerness to break loose from present limitations err on the side of extravagance, that we do not take sufficiently into account the grave difficulties which beset our path, that we are unheeding of progress which has been made in many directions. I shall refer briefly to some of these directions.

First, the whole attitude towards the education of girls has been transformed. Instead of apathy and even of active opposition there is now growing sense of the value and importance of girls' education. Not only are girls coming to school in largely increasing number, but (even more important) they are tending to stay longer at school and are making more sustained progress. This tendency is confirmed by statistics, the number of girls who have been successful in matriculation has increased from 1,002 in 1927 to 2137 in 1932 ; and even more rapidly to 2770, in the following year. Again, the number of those who have graduated has risen from 130 in 1927 to 228 in 1932 ; and again more rapid to 335 in the following year. This remarkable increase has given rise to difficult problems which demand earnest consideration. Is the higher education of girls to be developed rigidly in imitation of boy's education, with all its defects and limitations ? Will the enrolment of girls' colleges, now so refreshing in their comparative efficiency and in the vitality of their corporate life, soon reach the gigantic dimensions of those of many men's colleges ? Let us take heed lest we fall.

It may cause surprise to those who live and work in Northern India that in British India as a whole nearly 40 per cent of the girls at school are enrolled in co-educational institutions. This is a satisfactory development, but only up to a point. India cannot afford to provide separate schools for girls in her innumerable villages ; the alternative lies therefore between co-education at least at the primary stage and a widespread denial of education for girls. Again, even if the necessary finances were forthcoming it is doubtful whether the multiplication of minute and inefficient schools for girls would be justified. A system of co-education, however, should not be confined merely to the pupils, and girls should not be admitted to boys' schools merely on sufferance ; co-education should be extended also to the staff. It is also for consideration whether girls' schools, where efficient, might not form a sounder basis than boys' schools for co-education. Women are usually more suitable than men as teachers for young children.

Another striking and pleasing example of progress is the change in attitude towards the education of what are generally termed the depressed classes. Until a few years ago, the normal means of assisting these classes was to institute separate and segregate schools for their children, thus accentuating the spirit of exclusiveness and crystallising the stigma which is attached to them. The new and refreshing policy is to do all that is possible in the encouragement of the admission of these children to the ordinary schools of the country. The Bombay Government have led the way by insisting as a condition of grant that a school shall not debar admission to these children. The only criterion should be the maintenance of a reasonable degree of cleanliness by the pupils all who comply with this condition should be freely admitted to schools irrespective of the class or caste to which they belong. Old time prejudice doubtless persists in certain places, but at long last we have adopted a right policy in this connection.

#### NARROWING ATMOSPHERE OF SEGREGATE SCHOOLS

I wish that I could record a similar dwindling in the enrolment of other kinds of segregate schools, which are maintained for the exclusive needs of a particular community, and a commensurate increase in the ordinary schools. As has been suggested by the Director of Public Instruction, Bihar and Orissa, India cannot afford five separate schools in each village, where one would be sufficient ; a district board school for boys ; a similar school for girls ; a pathshala ; a maktaba ; and a school for the depressed classes. Nor can it be advisable, especially in the present condition of India, that such large number of pupils should spend the important years of formative boyhood in narrowing atmosphere of such schools ; it would be far better for them as well as for the country as a whole if they joined in the

wider life of the ordinary schools, in bracing comradeship with boys of other communities. I would suggest to the Muslim community, in particular, that they would be better advised to press, if need be, for reasonable guarantees for the maintenance of their religion and culture in the ordinary schools than for a further multiplication of segregate schools.

### EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS

Another pleasing sign of the time is the increasing attention paid to education in rural areas. The effect of past neglect in this direction have been to impoverish the countryside by sucking initiative and capacity from the villages into the towns ; and the evil is accentuated by the fact that, village conditions being what they are, very few of those who have been educated in the towns return to serve the countryside.

Efforts are now being made in certain provinces to counteract this tendency by expending and improving the scope of vernacular middle schools, which should become the pivot of rural reconstruction. At first, the plan was to institute a few separate agricultural schools, but on the advice of the Linlithgow Commission, these have now given way to a attempt to harmonise the teaching and courses of of all rural schools to a rural environment. These efforts represent perhaps the most striking and promising development in educational policy in recent years. If we can succeed in this direction we shall not only relieve congestion in the universities, but (even more important) we shall play a vital part in the reconstruction of the countryside.

Another point in which distinct progress has been made is in the widening of school activities. In spite of the financial stringency, schools are now brighter places than they were ; in some there are gardens bright with shrubs and flowers, in the care of which the pupils play a vigorous part. Great progress has also been made in the playing of games, not only in the skill displayed but also in the spirit in which they were played. Considerable attention has also been paid to this development by the encouragement of games which make inexpensive demands in the matter of time, space and equipment.

The boy scouts—and I hasten to add the girl guides—have also contributed much towards the brightening of school life. They have provided ample facilities for healthy recreation ; they have installed a love and desire for social service ; they have already shown signs of transcending the distressing limitation of caste and creed. Whenever I visit a scout camp, I feel optimistic for the future of India.

### LITTLE HEADWAY AGAINST FORCES OF ILLITERACY

There is, therefore, good cause for encouragement ; but I wish that I could go further. I shall try to explain the reason for this qualification by recounting to you a story of which you may be familiar.

Historians often point to the Regent Orleans as one of the great failures in history ; the cause of his disappointment is thus explained. The day of his Christening was one of great rejoicing ; and many friends were present, each bearing a gift. One brought the gift of power ; another the gift of wisdom ; a third the gift of health and strength ; a fourth the gift of wealth : and so on. All were delighted and predicted a brilliant future for the little child. Towards the end of the ceremony, however, an old woman entered the room and asked why she had not been bidden. On receiving an unsatisfactory answer, she replied, 'Then he shall not have my gift, the gift to use his gifts'. Is it not possible that we also suffer from a similar disability ? We can point, as I have tried to do, to many encouraging achievements, but somehow or other, when we come to review the effects of our work as a whole, there is cause for grave disquietude.

Take, for example, the position of primary education. During the last ten years, the enrolment has risen by leaps and bounds ; and this indicates at any rate that even the poorest in the land are beginning to realize the benefits of education. But when we review the results of all this expenditure of time and money in the terms of literacy, we cannot but feel acute disappointment. In some provinces, indeed, very little headway is being made against the forces of illiteracy. Statistics tell the distressing tale that out of every hundred pupils enrolled in class I, only 21 on an average reach class IV (when literacy should be achieved) three years later.

The general results at the secondary stage are similarly disappointing. Whereas, on the one hand, boys in increasing numbers pass matriculation at an early age, some of them at the age of fifteen or even under, and then proceed prematurely

to college, over 55 per cent. of the boys in the upper classes of high schools are not sufficiently advanced even to compete for that simple test before they have reached the age of 13 and many of these have reached a considerably older age. Thus the former category of boys are denied the bracing benefits of school life, while the latter category are prolonging unduly their literary studies. About half of the candidates for matriculation are unsuccessful in the effort and thus represent a sad waste of effort.

There is a similar waste of effort in the university stage. It has been calculated that only 25 per cent. of those who enter a university succeed late in taking a degree within the normal period of time; the universities are therefore congested by large numbers of students who are not fitted to benefit by university teaching. And then, over and above these disappointments, there is the nightmare of unemployment among the educated classes.

A remedy often proposed for these evils is a further stiffening of the standards of university examinations; but such action, in my opinion, would be both premature and ineffective. It would either accentuate the waste, serious enough already, by prolonging still further the unfruitful labours of those whose bent does not lie in literary studies; or it would be a means of denying educational facilities to students, merely because they had no bent for literary education.

I therefore suggest that the Punjab University Committee were correct in their contention that university reform in itself would be of little value and that to become effective it should be based on a drastic reconstruction of the school system, by means of which boys would be diverted at an earlier stage either to occupations or to vocational training in separate institutions. This contention has been unanimously endorsed by the recent Universities Conference.

The present drift of students, whatever be their bent and their capacities, is due very largely to the fact that all pupils, even at the primary state, are taught on the assumption that they will eventually proceed to a university. The solution is to provide separate stages of education, each with a well-defined objective and to ensure that pupils shall attain the objective of each particular stage, which they attempt.

The primary stage should be one of five years, on the completion of which literacy should have been attained. Primary schools should therefore comprise five classes, and not, as is often the case, only three; they should be wisely distributed, inspection should be helpful as well as critical; the teachers should not only have been well-trained, but in rural areas should be in sympathy with rural requirements. On the completion of this stage, the majority of pupils would enter upon the work of life, invigorated by the attainment of literacy.

Over and above the primary stage, there should be a shortened secondary course, which would provide a good general education, untrammelled by university requirements, for boys up to about the age of fifteen. On the completion of this stage, many again, would be absorbed into the humbler occupations of life, others would receive vocational training with the advantage of having acquired a suitable basis of general training; others, again, would prepare themselves for admission to a university. As soon as alternative facilities for vocational training had been provided, universities would be fully justified in improving their standards of teaching and examination.

Such, in brief, is the scheme of reconstruction, which has recently been propounded by the Government of the United Provinces, and on which opinions have been solicited. There must inevitably be differences of opinion in matters of detail; I myself regret that a three-years degree course has not been proposed as a period of two years is too short for a University or a college to impress its influence on the students; but as to the general scheme of reconstruction there can scarcely be two opinions. Schools and colleges will then have their own objective and one which should be within their own objective, one which should be within the competence of each: the bugbear of biennial examinations will have been reduced and each examination will become solely the means of testing whether candidates have achieved the objective of that particular stage; pupils will be provided with an education best suited to their attainments. Within the frame-work schools should attain greater freedom, which is most desirable. A lead has therefore been given, the question is whether we shall respond to that lead.

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In Madras there are three universities viz., Madras, Andhra, and Annamalai, with 28, 6 and 68 university professors and other teachers respectively : total, 102. This is very much less than Great Britain's total of 5,519.

The whole of the Indian Empire, including Burma and the Indian States, of which the population is 352,837,778, as against Great Britain's 44,937,444, contains 18 universities, as against Great Britain's 16. The total of the university teaching staff of these 18 universities is 1012. This is less than one-fifth of that of Great Britain. Therefore, assuming that the intellectual capacity and equipment of university teachers in India are equal to those of the university teachers of Great Britain, the whole of India offers less than one-fifth of the facilities for higher learning and research possessed by Great Britain. Even if we added the number of the professors and other teachers in the constituent colleges of Indian universities to the number of university teachers proper, the total would come to only 2299 less than half of Great Britain's 5,519. Lastly, "though in giving the number of Great Britain's university teachers I have not included college professors and tutors", let me in the case of India include the professors and other teachers in affiliated colleges. Even in that case, the total of all university and college teachers comes to 7,383. Considering the extent and population of India this is quite inadequate, to say the least. The area and population of the Indian Empire are 1,808,679 square miles and 352,837,778 persons ; and the area and population of Great Britain are 89,041 square miles and 44,937,444 persons.

Sir George Anderson has complained that in India "each university is bent on providing ample facilities for higher education and research in almost every conceivable subject". The facts and statistics given in the foregoing paragraphs will, I hope, convince unbiassed readers that the facilities provided are very far from being ample and that they are also very far from being in almost every conceivable subject.

Sir George Anderson makes it a grievance that "the Indian university system is still overburdened by an excessive number of students" (page 63 Vol. 19.) He has not said whether the students whose number he considers excessive are students in university departments and classes or also those in constituent colleges, and in affiliated colleges too. For comparison with Western countries—say Great Britain—only university students proper, e. g. post graduate students ought to be taken into consideration as in Western universities our graduates are generally not given the same academic standing as their graduates. I shall however give the numbers of students of university departments and classes of constituent colleges and of affiliated colleges too in India.

The number of students in the sixteen universities of Great Britain is 53,386. This figure does not include 11,296 external students of the London University nor its 10,184 University Extension students. If we have to take into account our colleges students also, I should include the 353 students of University College at Exeter, 682 students of University College at Nottingham, 1,297 students of University Colleges at Southampton, 1,375 students of University College at Leicester and 206 students of University College at Hull. Thus the total number of University and College students in Great Britain is 78,979. This is, of course, exclusive of the number of students in the many agricultural Colleges, technical institutes and other institutions for higher professional and vocational training in Great Britain, of which we have very few in Indian.

In the 18 universities of the Indian Empire there are 10,458 students in the University departments or classes, 15,475 students in constituent colleges, and 79,310 students in affiliated colleges : total 105,238.

Great Britain with a population of over 44 million has 53,386 university students ; the Indian Empire with a population of over 352 millions has 10,458 university students. The Indian figure is very small. Great Britain has 78,979 university and college students. India has 105,238. As India's population is eight times that of Great Britain, India ought to have 631,832 university and college students (instead of 105,238 which she has), in order to be equal to Great Britain in higher academic education.

I have said in a previous paragraph that Bengal, United Provinces, and Madras have each a larger population than Great Britain. The number of university and college students in these and some other provinces are compared with that of Great Britain in the tabular statement printed below.



Country or province,	Populaion.	Number of University & College Students.
Great Britain	44,937,444	78,979
Bengal	51,087,338	27,623
United Provinces	49,614,833	10,687
Madras	47,193,602	20,976
Punjab	24,018,639	16,971
Bombay	26,398,997	14,499

N. B. The population figures for the provinces include those of the States attached to them except partly in the case of Madras where they exclude Cochin and Travancore.

In estimating the spread of high education in any country or province, its population should always be borne in mind. For the Provinces of India the numbers of students given are for 1932, for Great Britain it has been compiled from the Statesman's Year Book for 1931.

I have said above in this article that the total educational expenditure of the General and Provincial Governments in British India in 1931-32 was Rs. 12,46,07,093. In that year the total revenue of the Central and Provincial Governments was Rs. 203,72,52,000, according to the Statesman's Year-book for 1933. Therefore, in British India in that year Government spent a little more than 6 (six) per cent of its revenue for the promotion of all kinds (general, professional, vocational, technical, etc), and grades (university, collegiate, secondary and primary) of education. Such being the extent of the total expenditure, it is for Sir George Anderson to convince the public that there has been an 'insidious form of extravagance' for the promotion of any grade of education. The progressive States of the world and even progressive 'States' in India spend a larger proportion of their revenues on educating their people. But that is another story.

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## The Madras University Convocation

Mr. *M. Ratnaswami*, M. A. Barrister-at-Law, addressed the annual Convocation of the Madras University, which was held in the Senate House, Chepauk, Madras on the 2nd August 1934. Mr. Ratnaswami took for his theme "Universities and the Service of the State." The following is the text of his address:—

Fellow-graduates—you have been admitted to degrees of this University. What is the significance of the new life to which you have been called? One of the first lessons that a student of history learns is that, if one would understand an existing institution, one would do well to refer to its past. If one would learn the meaning of the University of Madras and of its work, we could do well to remind ourselves of its origin. The University of Madras, in common with the older universities of India, owes its foundation to the Education Dispatch of 1854, issued by the Court of Directors of the East India Company to the Governor-General of India-in-Council. In the opening paragraphs of that Dispatch the rulers of the British India of those days announce to their representatives in India that 'the encouragement of education is calculated not only to produce a higher degree of intellectual fitness, but to raise the moral character of those who partake of its advantages and so to supply you with servants to whose probity you may with increased confidence commit offices of trust in India, where the well-being of the people is so intimately connected with the truthfulness and ability of officers of every grade in all departments of the State, and later in that great State paper they assert that they had always been of opinion that the spread of education in India would produce a greater efficiency in all branches of administration by enabling you to obtain the services of intelligent and trustworthy persons in every department of Government, and they believe that 'the numerous vacancies of different kinds which have constantly to be filled up may afford a great stimulus to education.' One sentence indeed of that Dispatch in which the Directors fear that

'it is not so much the want of Government employment as the want of properly qualified persons to be employed by Government which is felt at the present time in many parts of India' shows the long way we have travelled since 1854. But it also reveals the anxiety of the Government of that time to frame schemes of education—among them a University—that would ensure a never-failing supply of competent public servants.

This connection between the University and the public services of the Presidency has ever since been maintained. Its examinations have been recognised as intellectual tests for admission to the different grades of Government service. If in recent times a separate examination for admission to clerkships has been ordered by Government, it is because it was felt that a high grade University training and degree are not necessary for the routine and mechanical duties of a clerk. More than one of the distinguished administrators that have been called upon to deliver Convocation addresses have given expression to their satisfaction that, to quote the words uttered in 1884 of one of them, Surgeon-General Cornish, 'the wider employment of graduates and under-graduates in the public departments of the State has resulted in better work and in a distinctly higher tone of the public service'.

#### TRAINING OF SERVANTS OF THE STATE

Nor are these Governmental origins and connections of the University a thing to be deplored. Neither men nor institutions can choose their origins. In the Middle Ages of Europe an intellectual renaissance gave birth to the University. In Germany of the modern era the political and national motive has prevailed. In British India the better government of the country was one of the chief objects of the establishment of the first Universities. And who will say it is a mean motive? Compared to the vanity of fame, the rivalry of linguistic areas, or communal or provincial competition, the training of competent servants of the State is a respectable motive.

Nor again, is it in the narrow sense of Government service that this motive was interpreted. In that very dispatch of 1854, the Court of Directors hope that 'the material interests of India will not be altogether unaffected by the advance of European knowledge, that this knowledge will teach the natives of India the marvellous results of the employment of labour and capital, rouse them to emulate us in the development of the vast resources of this country, guide them in their efforts and gradually but certainly confer on them all the advantages which accompany the healthy increase of wealth and commerce. The promotion of national unity is one of the greatest services that any institution can render to a State. Lord Napier, Chancellor of the University, addressing the graduates at the Convocation of 1869, referred to the question of unity of India, and hoped that the higher European culture introduced by the Universities would weave the bond of union for India' and that 'those who have filled a common hall, mixed on the same benches and have crowded to the fountains of knowledge with the same thirst and who have been fused together by the fire of the same generous ambitions would call each other fellow-countrymen and do a common work'. Lord Napier went on to prophesy that 'Universities in India are destined to a greater duty than they have exercised elsewhere' and that 'they would be not only the nursing mothers of learning and virtue and intellectual delights, but the nursing mother of a new commonwealth', and Mr. Justice Innes speaking in 1876 in the Convocation address of that year pins his hope for the introduction of constitutional measures in India on the spread of university education in the country.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL IDEAL<sup>1</sup>

And what Indian Universities have done for the growth and development of nationality and the national ideal, the historian of the national movement in India will acknowledge. The founders of the national movement in every province were, many of them if not all, University men. The Indian National Congress was built up and till about 15 years ago was dominated by University men. The main stream of nationalism has been fed by the ideas that have their source in the books read and the instruction given in the colleges of our Universities has raised our self-respect and increased our appreciation of India's achievements. Thus by the education of men to fill the various departments of administration, of men and women to be the teacher's of youth, by the introduction of the vivifying influences of western learning and civilisation, by the promotion of nationality and nation-

forming culture, the older universities of India in general and university of Madras in particular have served the intention of their founders.

According to Sallust, the Latin historian, dominion is maintained by the arts by which it was first established. This maxim is applicable to other than political institutions. The University of Madras having been established for the service of the State, it seems to me appropriate on an occasion like this to ask the question: How far does the University serve this purpose? How far are the graduates that it produces equipped for the realisation of this purpose? The service of the State is an easy platform phrase but a difficult ideal to realize. Especially difficult is it in India where the State has been late in coming. In India where the service of one's dharma, caste, class, or community has long prevailed, the service of the State is not easy to follow. For it calls upon individuals and communities always and everywhere to place the interests of the State above their own. It calls upon administrative officials, for instance, that on any question that comes before them for advice or decision they shall prefer the interests of the State, of the country, of the people as a whole to the claims of caste, or community, or self. It demands to take another instance, that when a legislature or an electorate is faced by a question of men or of affairs to be decided, political leaders shall see that their followers prefer the common good to the prosperity of any interest however important or however heavily vested. It calls upon the makers of public opinion so necessary for the life of every free State, to stand and fight for the common weal rather than defend this or that smaller claim or demand. What has the University of Madras done to teach its graduates and under-graduates this public spirit and train them in these political obligations? Knowledge it has given them through its courses of study and examinations, and the cleverness and resourcefulness of the Madras clerk or official have been the envy and admiration of central and other provincial secretariats. But what has the University done to train its men and women in that social character and spirit which the service of the State implies?

#### TRAINING ON THE SOCIAL SIDE

This cannot be imparted in lecture halls, though the good lectures in history, or literature, or politics or economics may inculcate a lesson on the need and the art of social solidarity. It is in the life of hostels, and unions, and clubs and games that under-graduates can learn to live the social life and get rid of undue attachment to their own family or neighbourhood or society. It is in such organised social life of College or University that the future citizen can learn to accommodate his thought and will to the thoughts and wills of others, to respect the rights of others, to be mindful of his duty to others, to discipline his selfishness—in a word to live the life of the State. It is in the social life that the University provides or encourages that this training for 'the life of the State can be secured. The University has no hostel of its own, although it insists on Colleges maintaining hostels. When we find that out of about 15,000 undergraduate students only about 4,000 who do not live with their families live in hostels, and we know that whole groups of students like the Law and Medical students in the city are without hostels, we cannot say that adequate provision has been made by the University for the social life of its students. Few of the colleges or hostels have Common Rooms where students could meet and learn to know each other and the dining messes in most hostels still continue to be unsocial in their number and diversity. A University Union has been started but on an experimental basis and in conditions hardly ensuring success. It is because our University is an examining University that the authorities have begun building an Examination Hall before thinking of building a University Hostel or a permanent and well-appointed habitation for a University Union? Nor is the organisation of University athletics and games within sight. There is, however, one bright spot in the recent annals of the University, and that is the increasing encouragement and subsidy given by the University to the University Training Corps. But the Corps has always been under its sanctioned strength, and here and there Colleges have known to look askance at the enlistment of recruits to the Corps. If only College authorities realised what an excellent instrument of discipline and training ground of social character and leadership the University Training Corps is, the Corps would always be up to its strength and the prospects of neighbouring Universities getting their own U. T. C's would be brighter than they are at present.

The obligations of the University to students and to the State require that it shall provide itself and through its Colleges for that social education which will convert its students into citizens. There may be men in authority in University or College who look with amused scepticism, if not with positive hostility, at the new social life and activities that fill a larger part of the life of the student than in an earlier generation. They detract so much from the time and attention given to the passing of examinations, and the parents of our boys, so runs the complaint of these critics, have entrusted them to the University and its Colleges to pass them through the examination mill. I deny that University examinations are the only test of the usefulness of a University student in later life. They test a few of the qualities necessary for success in life like memory, industry, application, concentration of mind. But the more useful qualities of leadership, tact, decision, management of men and affairs are learnt in the playing fields, in the hostels, the unions, and clubs that a student joins in his University days.

As for the intellectual side of University education I would earnestly plead that the genuine tutorial system, which consists in a regular Professor or Lecturer being in charge of a small number of students whose reading he guides and with whom he discusses the subject of a weekly essay may be more widely used, whereas most colleges seem to be satisfied with the imitation article which consists in the appointment of a low paid corrector and marker, of more or less satisfactory answers to more or less probable questions. It is the weekly essay and the discussion with one's tutor, the training in the art of examining and appraising original documents or historical or political data or economic facts that distinguish the Honours courses at English Universities, and which would, till the want is made good in India, make it advisable for our best graduates to English Universities to get a training which Indian Universities and Colleges do not at present provide. It is in the corporate union of teachers and students that the essential idea of a University is realized. It does not require the teaching of universal knowledge to make a University. People who require all branches of knowledge to be taught in a University had better resort to an Encyclopaedia or a literary Pantechnicon. The University was in its origin a Universitas or corporation of masters and scholars. It is the corporate life of teachers and students living together, learning from each other, the older generation influencing the younger by example more than by precept that constitute a University, and this we can have in the Colleges and the Hostels of the University whatever may be its constitution—unitary, affiliating or federal.

#### SCIENCE OF ADMINISTRATION

And with regard to the subjects of study at our University may I ask the authorities when they set themselves to answer the appeal of distinguished personages that Universities should select only a few subjects each for specialised and post-graduate study, to consider the question of organising such study in a subject which should be specially appropriate to the University of Madras? May I put in a plea for the establishment of a school of public administration under the auspices of the University? The day is long past when administration was said to be an art rather than a science, that it could be learnt only in the actual business of administration. Administration is very much an art, but it is also a science: for, what is a science but organised knowledge on any subject. It is not a teacher in the first flush of administrative experience that advocates this view. It was the conviction of a great man of affairs. The late Lord Haldane was not only a great judge and lawyer but a great administrator. According to Field-Marshal Lord Haig, he was the greatest war minister England has ever had. Giving evidence before the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry in 1919, he spoke of the 'science of administration' and when he was asked 'if it was something which can be taught and not merely picked up, he answered, 'certainly—taught exactly as a university professor teaches his students, and he told the Commission how when as Secretary of State for War he wanted military officers to be trained in administration and found no special school of administration to hand, he sent them to the London School of Economics and Political Science and made use of its available resources. He went on to point out that for a school of public administration the atmosphere of a University was especially necessary and that it is 'inspiring contact of the personality of teacher with that of the taught and the suggestion of not merely dry knowledge but of initiative and personality at every turn' which produces that atmosphere. Schools



of public administration are to be found not only in London University but in other English and American Universities. The institute of Public Administration in England, the English Journal of Public Administration and the French International Review of Administrative Sciences further show that knowledge of public administration is being organised and systematised, in other words, that it is capable of scientific treatment.

Nor need the University strain its resources beyond its strength to found such a school. The work of the University Departments of Indian History and Economics and of the Law College and of the College of Commerce, that was and may be again, may be pooled, and with the institution of Readerships in general Politics and in Public Administration and with the establishment of a University hostel and Union to give the social atmosphere necessary for real University training, the Madras University may inaugurate the career of a great school of public administration in India. Though limited in general political experience, India has had a varied administrative experience. Administration will always play a dominant part in the public life of the country, as the State in India has to do many things left elsewhere to private and corporate endeavour. The services in India are succeeding to the traditions of a famous civil service. The Madras Presidency has produced great administrators for itself, the Central Government and the Indian States. The District Boards and Municipalities are looking to a permanent civil service of their own to ensure administrative efficiency. There is also a growing body of men, who bereft of opportunities of University education like to go through a course in politics and economics and other branches of knowledge useful in administration. Such are the new men, who, under the constitutional reforms awaiting legislative enactment may be called upon to undertake the duties of Legislative Councils, District Boards and Municipalities. There are also the members of the Zamindar families who ever since the abolition of their special school about 15 years ago, have had to go away from the Presidency for their education or remain without it. It is a good and welcome sign of the times that Zamindars are taking up position in the public life of the country. They have the leisure and the social position to enable them to become leaders. But modern leadership requires knowledge. The University of Madras seems called upon to supply the growing demand for a well-equipped, scientifically trained, and socially educated body of administrators and public men, and I hope it may soon be able to answer that call.

#### CALL FOR SERVICE

It is this call for service that the University must accept, if it is to continue to play a part worthy of its position in the public life of the province. Time was when University men played the leading part in public affairs. Not only in the professions of Law and Medicine and in the administrative services but in political life University men led and others followed. But for some time past the leadership of India has been fast slipping from the hands of University men. In Local Boards and in Legislative Councils the democratisation of the franchise has kept down the proportion of University men in them, and with the further extension of franchise, especially in single member constituencies become the order of the day. University men are bound to see their number still further reduced in the representative assemblies of the country. In movements towards social reform and amelioration they do not give the lead they used to give in the past. Ours is in part a civic University. What has it done to fulfil its civic obligations? Does the Corporation of Madras owe much to the business enterprise of the great commercial houses. What are they to the University and what is the University to them? Have its laboratories nothing to offer them as the results of chemical research? Have they nothing to offer it in the shape of endowments?

If the University and University men are to play an important part in the life of the country they must do something more than they are doing at present to add to the richness of that life. If the University may not lead, it can serve. If its men may not lead in politics, it can furnish politicians with ideas. There is especially one important intellectual service the University may render the country. India is aiming at national unity. This national unity if it is to endure must be based on a common culture. The political confusion that paralyses us is a consequence of the chaos of thought that prevails. It is in the evolution of a common culture that University can perform the intellectual service required of them. At Universities should be forged those ideas that will unite and bind, and



that will break the influence of the many ideals and institutions that keep man from man and community from community in India. A theory of Nationality, or of Natural Rights, or of Social Justice, whatever it is to be, this body of ideas must bring together the people of India, Hindus, orthodox and reformed, and Muslims, and Christians, and burn their mutual suspicions and hostilities out and fuse their separate aspirations into a common purpose. Nor is this intellectual service to be bounded by the frontiers of India. The greatest need of the world to-day is peace. Peace cometh only from understanding—understanding among the peoples of the world. The historical cleft between East and West is wide as ever. The harmonising of the ideas of the East and of the West—for East and West need each other as they supplement each other—is the task set before intellectual men to-day. Universities in India can do no nobler work than to bring about this intellectual union between East and West.

#### ADVICE TO GRADUATES

And now, graduates of the year, let me address a few words to yourselves. Although I have spoken all this time of the University, it is of you that I have been thinking. For it is not bricks and mortar that make a University—though I do hope that the Library and the University lecture halls and hostel and Union will soon be built, but it is students and teachers that make a University. If I have been putting before the University the ideal of the service of the State, it is because I pray you will devote yourselves to that service. All the noble ideals by which Indian youth are inspired at present can be realised in and through the State. If you want your country to be one and united you must, whatever your calling in life, put the State above class or community. If you want your country to be free you must flock to the service of those instruments of freedom, the army and the navy, however difficult that service may be. If you want your country to be self-governing you must make use of all those opportunities for self-government that Union Panchayats, Local Boards and Municipalities offer. Take a hand in the formation of sound public opinion in regard to local government as it is almost conspicuous by its absence. If government by the people is to be realised public opinion must be alert and critical and constant. The lack of public opinion is the greatest defect and danger in the public life of India. Do something to make up the deficiency, wherever you may be and in regard to however small a matter, even if it were only the removal of a village nuisance and if the method were only the writing of a letter to the editor of a newspaper. Do not disdain the lower ranges of public life. By all means devote yourselves to national service. But remember, as a sympathetic English visitor told an Indian student, that your country may be too large to devote yourselves to straight-away and you might begin by working for your immediate neighbourhood or village or town.

Democracy spells responsibility and if democracy is to be a reality and not a mere paper constitution the sense of responsibility must be highly developed in every individual citizen—responsibility to one's higher self, responsibility to duty, responsibility to the common weal. National self-determination can come only from a nation of self-determining individuals, not from a collection of atoms blown about by every passing wind of doctrine or mode of life.

In every sphere you can practise the social and political virtues that are necessary for the prosperity of our country. The daily events of an ordinary life will furnish you with the opportunities. It was a saying of the great Negro leader Booker T. Washington : 'Not everyone can do extraordinary things, but everyone can do ordinary things in an extraordinary manner'. The Government official who is tempted to prefer individual gain or communal interest to the high standard of conduct that should obtain in any administration worthy of the country, the politician who is called upon to vote for the interests of his party or class rather than for the progress of the country, the rich landlord or merchant who would live a life of ease and self-indulgence would be all true nationalists and lovers of their country if they resisted the temptations of their order and made the call of the State paramount. Thanks to a long drawn out process of political evolution, thanks especially to the widely-pervading dominance of British rule, the State has at last emerged in India. But has it emerged in everyone of us ? As long as we think and work first and last for our own selves, our own kindred or class or party or group, the State cannot be said to be secure in India. For it is in the thoughts and acts of individuals that the State lives and moves and has its being.

### LOVE THE STATE

Pray do not misunderstand me. I am not holding a brief for the paramount State, the totalitarian State, as it is the fashion now to call it. If I have here and elsewhere pleaded that due regard and respect be paid to the State, it is because the State in India has not yet won the whole-hearted allegiance of the individual, and the claims of other secular institutions are, in practice, if not in theory, still treated as superior. But the respect and regard we pay to the State is what is due to it—nothing less—but emphatically nothing more, than what is due to it. God, Conscience and Religion are the highest peaks of human experience. The State also is subject to 'higher powers'. The service of the State is honourable service, it is the service of freemen—it is not idol worship. It is to the extent to which the State allows us to be free, self-respecting, conscience-bound, that it is worthy of our love and loyalty. Love of the State not moderated by humanity or morality leads to such evils as political assassination, the tyranny of majorities over minorities and international hatreds. The State is not an end in itself—it is only a means to an end which is the individual. And it is when the individual is strong, self-reliant, independent, able to resist the influence of the crowd or of fashion that the State is secure against the lesser loyalties of group or class. Plato in Book IV of the Republic has shown that it is the individual that recognizes in himself the supremacy of the Spirit and of Reason over instincts and impulses that will in political life recognize the sovereignty of the State. The man who subjects his conscience to the State will end by subjecting the State to himself as the history of Dictatorship in all ages has shown. The address of the Jacobean poet to his beloved may well be the motto of every true citizen of the State :

I could not love thee, dear, so much,  
Loved I not honour more.

### KEEP FREE OF MATERIALISM

Be not materialist. Materialism is the creed of plutocracy. It does not stand the strain of war, or defeat or depression. Herbert Spencer, Huxley, Hackel were the fashionable influences of my student days. I have lived to see scientists become spiritualists and Rationalism, displaced by Psycho-analysis. Remember that you are the heirs of a great religious tradition. India, poor in the things of the world, is better off in the things of the other. Our Hindu ancestors were the discoverers of a new world—the world of the Absolute. Islam has brought into India the flaming belief of the Unity and Personality of the Godhead. And Christians belong to 'the Word that was made Flesh and dwelt amongst us.' If India is to become a great State, the waste places of whole regions have to be levelled, the wounds of a thousand years have to be healed, and the omissions of whole epochs have to be made good. It is giants' work that lies before us. Nothing but Religion can give us the nervous force that will arm us for the struggle. It was not a man of religion but a man of affairs, Lorenzo de Medici who said, "Those who do not believe in another world are more dead than alive in this."

There is a by-product of materialism that I would like to warn you against. In the latter years of my life among students, I found a strain of cynicism creeping into their attitude towards life. The failure of a formidable political movement, the slow rate of social and political progress, disillusionment of educated youth facing the consequence of the economic set-back of the last decade turned generous-hearted young men into crabbed cynics. What does it matter? And if it matters it won't matter long—were the phrases one heard on the lips of young men of those days. I hope the youth of to-day have recaptured the enthusiasms that are appropriate to their nature. By all means be realists, see things as they are, see them as a whole. But cherish ideals of what may be. Not only are they blind, says Plato, who have no knowledge of that which really is 'but who have no distinct pattern in their soul, and cannot look like painters to the perfect truth, and contemplate the standard which they have yonder.' Cynicism is the vice of disappointed and disillusioned old age. The predisposing causes of despondency are not as strong as once they were. The political horizon is brighter than it has been for some years past. A great vista of social service has been opened by the movement to remove untouchability.

## SPECTRE OF UNEMPLOYMENT

One cause of the discontent of youth is still as operative as it was. Unemployment still stares educated young men in the face. I will not deceive you with false hopes. However much one would like Government services to be staffed by University men, one cannot close one's eyes to the fact that the supply is much greater than the demand. Nor have I any sovereign remedy for the malaise. I will not ask you to go back to the land. It is cruel advice to give to the University student that is not a Graduate in Agriculture. After having educated you out of love for and attachment to the soil and urbanized your tastes and mode of living and outlook men have no right to ask you to go back on what you have become. I am not competent to advise the University on the question of the establishment of a School of Technology. But speaking as a member of the general public, I should say that unless work is found in the factories, workshops and railways for the men trained in technology it would be a woeful waste of highly trained men to produce them. And if they also become unemployed, they would in addition be a danger, for they would know something to do with their hands.

There are two drastic remedies that may stem the tide of unemployment if they will not already dispose of those already unemployed. The first is that parents should realize that their children need not become B.A.'s in order to earn the salary of an average B. A. A school-education, supplemented by shorthand, type-writing or commercial course, or by secondary technical training, or fortified by proficiency in sports is generally enough to get boys the living which a University degree may or may not obtain. Parents should also look ahead at least 10 years for their children and see in what occupations the supply would be somewhere near the demand, and determine their children's education in accordance with an intelligent forecast. And public opinion mainly through newspapers and the advice of educated men should inform uninformed parents in the country-side of the true state of affairs. And here in passing may I say that one cause of unemployment might not have operated if every stage of education had been raised to lead to a corresponding stage of employment. If there had been elementary and secondary agricultural and industrial institutions training boys for the different grades of agricultural and industrial employment, and if employers contented themselves with taking the grade of man for the grade of work required instead of succumbing to the vanity of having University-trained men in their employ, simply because they could be got for the low wage they offer, unemployment would not have attained the formidable proportions it has. The second remedy is that colleges should cease to depend for their existence on the free income collected from students. It is because in most colleges other than Government colleges as many students are admitted as are necessary to keep the college going that more University graduates are produced than the country can absorb. It is on endowments rather than on fee income that University colleges in the West rely. University education in India should not be fostered at the expense of the students and their parents.

## PRIDE OF WORK

Whatever your employment may be, take pride and pleasure in your work. Do your work well, for work well done makes for the dignity and self-respect of man. There is the story of a traveller accosting some workers who were busy building and he asked them what they were doing. One said, 'I am doing this bit of masonry work'. Another said, 'I am earning five shillings a day.' A third man stood up and said, 'I am building a Cathedral.' Whatever your work may be, remember that you are building a Cathedral of India's greatness. If you are to be a clerk, write out your notes carefully and neatly. If you are to be a lawyer or a doctor, do the best for your client or patient, whether you are paid ill or well and without losing your souls to touts and practices unworthy of your professions. If you are to be engineers or agricultural officers, remember that the building of India's economic prosperity is placed in your hands. If you are to be teachers, give of your best to your pupils, although there will be much to depress you, the lack of public esteem and even of sympathetic society, especially in the rural parts, the most disheartening cause of the depression being that men in authority will say that yours is the noblest profession, but will find that they can do nothing to make your social position correspond to your high calling, whereas in any well ordered State, teachers ought to be ranked in the highest class

of public servants. If you are tempted to scamp your work or to do the minimum required to earn your salary, or to fall a victim to worse temptations, realize that thereby, you are postponing the day of India's recovery, *Noblesse oblige*. Remember that you are University men and women. 'Even B. As'. do these things' a complaint we hear when University men go wrong is a compliment to the University and a reflection on its graduates. Be true to the solemn obligations you have undertaken this afternoon when you promised before all the world to conduct yourselves "as becomes members of the University in your daily life and conversation".

#### READING AS THE STAFF OF LIFE

Together with the habit of cynicism to which I referred a little while ago, may I draw your attention to another characteristic feature in the life of the modern graduate, and that is a falling off in the habit of reading. Some reading, of course, enters into the life of most graduates, reading of the daily newspaper and of P. G. Wodehouse and of Edgar Wallace. I have nothing to say against these means of relaxation. I am thinking rather of the reading, of the classics of English literature which used to be more general among the graduates of the last century. Believe me, after Religion, there is no such staff of life as books. From 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' and the 'insolence of office and the spurns that patient merit of the unworthy takes' you may find a refuge in the realms of gold. A shelf of books, bought and not borrowed, ought to be the ornament of every graduate's home. Read the two classes of books—books of knowledge and books of power. Read books of knowledge, for whatever your department of work, knowledge in the subject of your department will always be useful. For you never can tell when the knowledge may be needed and the need will prove the man and his fortune. It is knowledge added to the character you already possess that will ensure your promotion to the next stage of success in business or administration or in the professions of Law, Medicine, Teaching, Engineering, or Agriculture. It is only the second-rate man of affairs that despises books and talks vacuously of experience. For what are books but written experience? And the greatest men of action from Julius Caesar to Mussolini have been great readers. Read also books of power, for you must not starve your emotions or yours will be the wistful complaint of Charles Darwin, who after years of scientific preoccupation could no longer enjoy a line of poetry. And if reading, according to the saying of Bacon, is to make you a full man, you must allow your reading to influence your life. What is the use of reading Mill on Liberty, or Morley on Compromise, or Rousseau on Equality if in our daily lives we cherish the dead hand of custom or dare not be in the right with two or three, or refuse to treat untouchables as men, or in the words of Morley 'pretend to accept other people's falsehoods simply because we cannot persuade them to accept our truths'.

#### UNIVERSITY SETTLEMENTS

There is one respect, however, in which the modern student is superior to the student of an older generation and that is in his social opportunities. He plays games, forms clubs and societies of all kinds and takes an interest in social problems. These habits of social life are all to the good of the individual and of society. Continue in the habits of social life that you have formed in your undergraduate days. Let your social contacts be numerous and ever widening. Make friends in other communities than your own. Friendship restricted to your own caste is not friendship—it is clanishness. Political solidarity in India will come not from franchise systems or unions—made by law, but from habits of sympathy with other people than your own, habitual consideration of the claims and rights of others, from a 'union between opposites.' It is thus that the evils of party rancour or communal divisions can be overcome. No man can be said to be a complete social being who has not friends in every community. Form clubs and associations of all kinds and live their social life. Rabindranath Tagore, speaking to the English artist Rothenstein attributed the low standard of social civilization in India to the fact that 'we in India live secluded among a crowd of relatives, and things are done and said within the family circle which would not be tolerated outside'. But social life becomes an enlightened form of selfishness if it does not include service. Especially for the academic man is social service necessary. There comes a moment in the lives of bookish men when books begin to pall and life calls for life. Before that moment of ennui come to you, or rather that it may not come to you,



I would ask you to take to some form of social service. Learn a lesson from that interesting chapter in the history of English and American Universities—that which tells the history of the University Settlement. There you will read how well-to-do but generous young men after their life at the University was over, went and settled down in the slums of London and other industrial cities, lived the life of the poor and tried to understand them and their needs. For they felt that understanding must precede service. 'He who will love his neighbour must first know him', said Canon Barnett to Arnold Toynbee, both of them founders of the University Settlement in England. May I plead for the inauguration of some form of University settlement work conducted by graduates of the University of Madras? Slums and sheries are always and everywhere with us. Could not a band of a dozen graduates be found in Madras to go and live in a University settlement house near to or amid the surroundings of the poor and untouchables, and learn to understand the thoughts and feelings and customs of these people before they attempt to help them? Settlement work may be the contribution of the Indian University to the solution of the problem of untouchability.

#### AID TO THE UNIVERSITY TRADITIONS

Finally, be proud of your University. Harsh things have been said of her in recent years. She is not perfect. In this very address certain directions of improvement have been pointed out. But given the conditions of her life, her poverty in endowments and the short time of her existence, she has done great and memorable work. She has produced some of the greatest men of modern India. And here may I be allowed to refer to the loss the University has sustained by the death this year of four men—who were her sons—and who have shed lustre on her name. Sir C. Sankaran Nair was a great judge and statesman. Sir C. V. Kumaraswami Sastri was eminent as lawyer and as a Judge. Dr. S. Rangachari was a great surgeon and a great philanthropist. Mr. M. A. Candeth was a distinguished teacher and educational administrator, a builder of the University Training Corps, and of social life and peace in the University and in the city. The traditions of our University have been built by the life and work of men such as these. They are traditions of hard work, service and honour. Treasure these traditions and live to honour them. They are few, because our University has been only 75 years in existence and till a few years ago it offered no teaching of its own, and till the other day it had no social life of its own. But few as these traditions are they must be fostered.

Add to these traditions by your own careers of service. Whatever changes may take place, I pray that the spirit of the University may be always the same. Testing times are before the University as before other institutions we have taken from the West. Questions will be asked frequently, persistently about the utility of the University to the common man. The man in the street, or rather in India, the man at the plough or at the loom will ask of what use the University is to him. The only satisfying answer that the University can give is service. The service of the State, of society, of country ought to be the objective of the University. And you men and women of the University of Madras can justify your training and Degrees and the expenditure of the State and the University and parents on University education only by a career of service. The note of modern political and social life is service. A modern French writer has argued that the criterion of modern sovereignty is service. A State is entitled to sovereignty only to the extent to which it serves its people and the world. The University of Madras will earn the regard of men only by the quantity and quality of its service. That you graduates of the University of Madras may be at all times ready to do service is the prayer of one who wants his University to take an honoured place in the life of his country. India wants so much service and of such varied kinds there is none of us so poor, so maimed or crippled that he cannot bring something of his own to the help of his country. However lowly your position may be, you can and must serve it. The poet Clough speculating on what might have been the last words of Wellington puts words into his mouth which might well serve as your motto in the life of service to which I ask you to dedicate yourselves, and which on behalf of the University I wish you God-speed.



# The Annamalai University Convocation

The Convocation of the Annamalai University was held at Annamalainagar on the 30th October 1934, the Chancellor, *H. E. Sir George Stanley* presiding. The function was held in the spacious University Hall, where had gathered a large assembly. Mr. *R. V. Krishnan*, Secretary, the Madras Legislative Council, delivered the Convocation address, of which the following are extracts:—

The controversy regarding the aim and purpose of education and especially higher education—whether it should be liberal or cultural or whether it should be useful and practical,—is as old as education itself.

In India, the highest ideal of education was knowledge for its own sake. The Brahmins (for they were the repositories of learning) were enjoined by their Dharma not to sell their learning, not to engage themselves in lucrative occupations or to accumulate wealth. If they monopolised learning, it was because other communities probably preferred to monopolise the more lucrative professions and occupations. Ancient Hindu society was built on the principle of co-operation and service, each individual carrying on his pre-determined Dharma for a common purpose without envy or hatred against any other.

That the highest learning was pursued for its own sake did not mean that occupational and professional skill was undeveloped or that the utilitarian and practical sciences were neglected. If anything is clear from a study of ancient Indian history and literature, it is the fact of an all-round development of its inhabitants in all branches of knowledge and in all the arts of peace and war.

At the time of the introduction of English education in this country, there were famous centres of oriental learning such as Nuddea and Benares, while, scattered throughout the country, there were schools in which education was imparted in the three R's. Vocations were mostly hereditary and vocational training was generally given in the family. But India remained shut out from a knowledge of the modern sciences and arts, and she was adhering to her traditional methods of learning.

## INTRODUCTION OF ENGLISH

The introduction of English education produced a profound change. It was accompanied by a distinct emphasis on its utilitarian character, which, though bonafide made to afford a stimulus to education, has, to no little extent, affected the subsequent history of higher education in this country.

In their desire to improve their material position and to obtain those opportunities of service, which employment under a progressive government anxious to bring about the prosperity and contentment of its subjects, afforded, Indians began to evaluate English education in terms of government service. But no Government could employ an unlimited number of subordinates, and the supply of graduates far outstripped the requirements of Government service.

In 1835, English replaced Persian as the language of the courts and many English educated men turned to the profession of Law, but that profession also soon became overcrowded. The number of graduates who are now going out to other professions or are chalking out independent careers for themselves has not been altogether negligible, but the percentage of such persons as compared with those who flock to Government service or the Law is very small indeed. For this state of affairs, it is not the students that are responsible. It is no use telling them that they are not after knowledge for knowledge's sake.

To expect Government to create extra administrative posts for the purpose of providing for these unemployed graduates, is to invite administrative inefficiency and financial extravagance. Self-reliance cannot be taught by an education in dependence on others. But no kind of education which is divorced from the main directions and interests of ordinary life and from the activities in which the mass of men and women must perforce engage themselves, can be said to be satisfactory or can survive long. The system of higher education in this country was based on the English type in the last century, which laid stress on 'the humanities' as against scientific and professional courses. The mechanical and industrial activities of modern society are so dependent on applied science that it is necessary to give

Nearly 84 per cent of the male population and 97 per cent of the female population of the Presidency are still uneducated and do not know even to read and write. Most of them still believe that the sun goes round the earth once daily, that eclipses are caused by two serpents devouring the sun and the moon respectively, that it is pollution to touch or go near certain classes of people, and that illness and epidemics are caused by angry gods and goddesses.

Mass education will bring in its wake a greater moral and material efficiency, a reduction in crime, better sanitation and public health, comparative freedom of the present from the rapacity of the usurer, a solution of the problem of the illiterate voter and many other advantages. It will make government easier. An illiterate nation has no politics. It cannot feel the glow of patriotism.

#### ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

As regards education for the child, it is now almost universally recognised that it is a function of Government and that it should be compulsory and free. It was made compulsory in England in 1870 and free in 1891. The compulsory age now stands in England at 14 and there is a strong agitation to raise it at least to 15. In India attempts have been made, at least since Mr. Gokhale's Elementary Education Bill of 1911 in the Imperial Legislative Council to introduce the principle of compulsion in primary education. In this presidency a modified form of compulsion already prevails. But in spite of this, the extent of juvenile illiteracy that exists in the Presidency is appalling. In the year 1931 out of a total of 7,817,768 boys and of 7,793,138 girls between 5 and 20 years of age, only 1,003,084 and 266,262 respectively were literate. The Unemployment Committee of Madras pointed out that,

"the responsibility for the removal of this illiteracy rests mainly on local boards and municipalities" and added :

"Considering the prime importance of elementary education in the work of nation-building and the value of a rise in the general level of intelligence as an essential condition of progress of all kinds, the neglect of duty on the part of public bodies in this respect casts a serious reflection on their patriotism and their disinterested zeal for the people's welfare".

If the responsibility for compulsory juvenile education rests on local bodies, that for adult education rests on the educated community. The work of adult education may seem difficult,—well-nigh impossible. But the difficulty of carrying out the work, regard being had to its vital importance, ought to be only a ground for making special efforts and not for neglecting the work. Those who are frightened, as well as those who require practical guidance in planning and carrying out a scheme of mass education, can do nothing better than study the details of the cultural campaign in Soviet Russia which has within the course of fifteen years resulted in a more or less complete liquidation of illiteracy in that vast area.

With hundreds of educated men on one side starving or unhappy for want of employment and a whole mass of the population on the other, not knowing even to read and write, it is surprising that we do nothing to utilise the former for the education and uplift of the latter. With granaries full of corn we look with unconcern and callousness on our starving countrymen !

A committee of educational captains assisted by a small body of public men and philanthropists should be formed at once, either for the whole Presidency or a group of districts or for each district for the collection of funds and for organising a widespread scheme of mass education. About 2,000 teachers should be recruited for the Tamil districts alone, for two years in the first instance, on a salary of about Rs. 30 or Rs. 35 per mensem each, and they should if practicable be given a brief training and then distributed among the districts according to the requirements thereof. If it is impossible to give any training, it may be dispensed with. The money required is not much and can come partly from Government and partly from the public. Some years ago, the Government spent four lakhs of rupees on a temperance propaganda, but the extension of primary education is no less important and will probably yield better results. No additional buildings need be constructed ; existing school buildings, temples, choultries, chavadies and the pials of private houses can be used. The committee above referred to can draw up a few lessons on such subjects as the structure and functions of Government and its departments, the functions and uses of

Local Self-Government, the part played by the Police in a well-ordered State, why taxes are paid and how they are spent, the purposes of elections and the necessity for their purity, personal hygiene and rural sanitation, drink and its evils, religious toleration. The teachers appointed will give set lessons in these subjects and will also teach the three R's to all men and women below 45 or even 50. Their work will be checked and inspected by non-official agency. By this means all our educated and deserving young men who are now unemployed, can be harnessed to a work of the utmost national importance with profit to themselves and with stupendous possibilities for the country. The volunteers in the army of the nation recruited for this great war against ignorance can also do social work in various other fields. Of late, in this country, a reaction has set in, in favour of several unjust and inhuman customs which the conscience of an earlier generation of English-educated people had unreservedly condemned. Sometimes, intellectual dishonesty finds justification for customs which its observers have no moral courage to abrogate. Such reaction and intellectual dishonesty have to be combated as much as ignorance and illiteracy. For all these purposes, our band of national volunteers will be of great use, provided that they undertake their work not for the sake of money but in a truly religious and apostolic spirit.

One of the main causes why English-educated men have not been able so far to undertake the education and social uplift of the masses has been their neglect of the vernaculars and of speaking and writing in their mother tongue. This University, by devoting special attention to the intensive and extensive development of Tamil language and literature, is intending to raise up a class of men who, in the words of the late Reverend G. U. Pope, will 'feel in Tamil, think in Tamil and speak in Tamil' and thereby make themselves 'intelligible and useful among the Tamil people.'

#### TAMIL CULTURE

The language and culture of the Tamils date back to a remote antiquity. Apart from its antiquity, the Tamil language contains a continuous and rich literature; and a critical study of it besides being valuable in itself, as pure intellectual pabulum, as much as the study of any of the classical languages is necessary for lighting up many of the dark places in South Indian history.

This University has set up a high standard in Tamil for the Intermediate and the B. A. examinations, has started an Honours course in Tamil, has an oriental section for giving instruction in Tamil and has also got a College for training Pandits in Tamil. Recently, a department of Tamil Research has been set up, and in course of time it will make important contributions to philology, to the study of ancient Tamil works, to epigraphical knowledge, and to the study of the origin and history of the Tamil language and alphabet. Tamil Scholars of the highest eminence are on the teaching staff of this University and their very presence in our midst is a liberal education to our students and an inspiration for the study and development of Tamil. Profound scholars trained on traditional lines are here collaborating with equally profound scholars who are trained in western scientific methods of study and criticism.

This University will not only familiarise its scholars with ancient Tamil literature, but is intending to undertake the publication of new books in Tamil on subjects of modern science, history and philosophy. It has already broken the ice by the publication of a book on modern Logic by Mr. Appalachariar and has advertised a prize for a treatise on Chemistry.

In this country at present, the profession of letters is not as attractive as it ought to be, so far as the Tamil language is concerned. Widespread ignorance of the masses is not a soil on which the plant of literary productivity can flourish. A conscious endeavour must be made to increase the output of useful books written in the Tamil language and it may be expected that the teachers attached to this University and the scholars going out of it, will ere long enrich the Tamil literature with their contributions to the stock of useful books in the language. There is here a wide field in which the more capable of our University graduates can find profitable employment in the future. Some of them can also get absorbed in the profession of Tamil journalism for which, with increased literacy in the land, there will be increased scope. An essential feature of Tamil literature is its sense of cosmopolitanism. People speak of a national education, sometimes without being clear as to

what is meant by the term. If it means that education should first concern itself with the nation's own history, with its contributions to knowledge and culture, with literature, and with its philosophy, it may well be claimed that this University is imparting such education in the truest sense and is helping to a rejuvenance of the South Indian people and a return of the South Indian soul to its best traditions.

The working of the University during the last five years has fully demonstrated the necessity for more funds to enable the University effectively to carry its avowed objects. For the setting up of a College of Technology, for the starting of a training college, for the organization on a permanent footing of the department of Tamil research, for the salvage and publication of ancient Indian works, for the encouragement of Books of modern knowledge in Tamil, and for various other purposes, the University is in need of funds without which it is unable to be of maximum benefit to the public at large. Few kinds of patriotic service to the Tamil land can be conceived which are of greater value than liberal financial assistance given at this juncture to this University. Many wealthy members of the charitable community to which the Founder of this University belongs are running Tamil or Sanskrit Pathshalas in various places. It would be a worthy object of charity for them to found scholarships and hostels for the advanced education in this University, of the boys taught in their pathshalas, and to emulate the example of the Founder in making this University a success. The famous mutts in South India have always been centres of great classical and religious learning and have materially aided in disseminating knowledge and religion. This University now represents the soul of Tamil literature and culture. May we not hope that our matathipathis will send their disciples for study to the Oriental section of this University and that they will enrich this University as well as immortalise themselves by founding a few chairs for the encouragement of Tamil research and of the study of the South Indian System of philosophy.

#### ADVICE TO NEW GRADUATES

Graduates of the year ! I congratulate you most heartily on the degrees and diplomas you have received. I congratulate such of you as have received medals or prizes on the distinctions obtained by you.

Do not treat the degrees and distinctions obtained by you as the termination of your studentship, but treat them as the beginning thereof. During your college days your curiosity was cramped by the dread of examinations. Now that you are free from it, you are no longer restricted in your choice, and are at liberty to develop your own tastes and interests. The more you learn, the more you will discover you have yet to learn, and the greater will be your desire to learn. Deeper you dig the sand spring, the more profuse is the water that flows out. By all means, earn money and become rich but at the same time also collect the treasure which no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. Always keep in touch with your books, and you will find that there is no more elevating, no more ennobling feeling, than that produced by a life in those elevated regions in which it is permitted to the living to hold high converse with the mighty dead, through the medium of books. Tamil poets constantly warn us that learning by itself is sterile unless combined with a power of lucid *exposition*. The author of Neethineri Villakkam asks, what is the use of learning without the power of expression ? Whether parliamentary government is suitable to this country or not, we have it already and are soon going to have more of it. Now parliamentary government is both in reality and as its name implies, government by talking. It will give advantage to those who can speak well. Apart from parliamentary honours, every one of you, in whatever department of life your lot may be cast, will find that your education shines better and is more useful to your neighbours, if it is combined with a power of persuasive or clear expression. No man can be persuasive or clear unless he possesses a knowledge of facts and is accurate in his statements of them. Mere verbal glory devoid of sincerity of purpose is also not likely to convince a businesslike audience of the modern day. Therefore, cultivate the art of faithful and elegant expression.

It is your duty sooner or later to find suited to your education and rank in life. I wish you complete success in your attempt at finding the kind of employment you desire and particularly a high post in Government service if you are after it. You need not therefore despair of finding suitable employment. Should you



unfortunately not find such employment, do not be afraid of taking up any honest work that is available. Have confidence in yourself but do not over-rate your importance. The disappearance of what the Hartog Committee called the 'lure of Government service' need not make you unhappy. The people who want safe official positions brand themselves as 'lacking in a spirit of adventure'. They are afraid of perilous seas and feel no longing for fairie lands forlorn. In the spacious days to come, there will be much wider chances of great achievement outside the ranks of Government service than within. Therefore be of good cheer, go forth, but be like men, be strong.

**"ALWAYS PLAY THE GAME!"**

In all your actions and doings, never attempt anything which is mean. Always play the game. Let the law of square deal be your constant motto in life. Although you should not neglect your prosaic and inevitable duty of earning your livelihood, do not forget that after all livelihood is not 'life.' "Is not the life more than meat and the body than raiment?" There are greater things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in a purely epigastrian philosophy.

In India, an old age is passing away and a new one is coming into being which is full of uncertainty. The very foundations of society seem to be crumbling before our eyes. What social and economic changes are hidden in the womb of the future we know not; but no one can fail to see that everywhere there is restlessness, new hope, a new promise of life. If there was ever a time when it was necessary to remember that service and co-operation are the life of the universe and that selfishness and competition are its death, it is now. Let us not lose sight of the fundamental Law. God is love. The world is based on love and there is more of affection than dislike between man and man, community and community and race and race. But in this world, dislike is more active and manifest than affection. It is your duty to reverse this order, to kill mutual suspicion and to bring about peace and goodwill among men. Then and then only shall we be able to reach the inevitable goal of a determined understanding and harmonious nation.

One common reproach against the system of education given in the schools and colleges in India is that there is absence of any religious background for it. Though the members of this University are not taught religion as such, most of them cannot fail to be affected by the spiritual atmosphere and the religious traditions attached to this holy town. To the Tamil scholar and to the Hindu, no other place is more fragrant with sacred memories, no other place is holier, no other place is more capable of purifying and elevating than this. Educated in such an atmosphere and amidst such surroundings, by a body of able and self-sacrificing teachers actuated by the highest enthusiasm, under the guidance of a learned Vice-Chancellor who is the very embodiment of those qualities of dignity, courtesy and competency which a good University is intended to foster, you are sure to acquit yourselves creditably in the battle of life and unto this behalf, you have the best wishes of the University and all who are connected with it. May truth, honour and success follow your footsteps!

## The Mysore University Convocation

*Lt. Colonel Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, Ex-Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University, in addresssing the Convocation of the University of Mysore on the 31st. October 1934, said :—*

Any one who is acquainted with the administration and affairs of this State, which has rightly earned the reputation of being a model State in India by its leadership and progress in mechanical, industrial, economic and educational developments, will be struck by the very friendly and cordial feeling which prevall among the different communities in the State. I am here referring not only to the Hindu, the Muslim and the Christian but also to the British and the Indian. If any one person is



responsible for this gratifying state of affairs, it is your enlightened ruler and leader, His Highness Sir Sri Krishnarajendra Wadiyar Bahadur, Maharaja of Mysore, the Founder and the Chancellor of this University, who combines within himself ancient wisdom and piety with progressive ideals of modern times. Every aspect of this State reflects his nobility of mind and breadth of outlook. Happy relations, as I have mentioned, prevail between the British and the Indian. And in the days to come, in the Federation of the whole of India, British and Indian, the role which this State and its representatives will play is bound to be a very important and influential one. For me it is a peculiar pleasure to find that the largest Hindu State has for its Chief Minister Amin-ul-Mulk Sir Mirza Muhammad Ismail Kt. C. I. E. O. B. E., Dewan Sahib of Mysore, a great and wise representative of the Muslim community to which I have the honour to belong. May the policy which inspires this administration be adopted on a larger, nation-wide-scale ! The feuds and the struggles which are strangling, so to say, the birth of a new India will then become things of the past and we will be able to build a country which will be greater in its future than even in its past, great as it has been.

### WOMEN'S EDUCATION

The problem of women's education has been engaging the attention of educationists as well as statesmen, here and elsewhere. This State by providing special colleges for women has given a special impetus to women's education. Among those who have taken their degrees to-day, I rejoice to see the names of a number of women graduates. The old saying is true, never more true than to-day, that the greatness of the civilisation of a country is judged by the respect it accords to its women. The remarks made by stray visitors to this country, that women are not treated with the respect and courtesy which they deserve cannot be quite true. As far back as the Vedic period, there were women who even composed hymns. There were philosophic thinkers like Gargi and Katyayani, who took part in intellectual debates reported in the Upanishads. The fact that the Hindu religion allows for the worship of goddesses indicates the high respect in which women were held. Have we not had in our history great Ranis and Maharanis who have shed lustre and brilliance in the administration of affairs of the State and staved off difficult situations by their timely intervention and wise counsel ? All the same, we have to make very great progress with regard to women's position in society and their education. We believe that the principles of all humanistic wisdom, reverence for individual personality and opportunities for the development of the possibilities of each human being, must be extended to womankind also. But the problem is not without its difficulties. Western nations are to-day revising their notions about the kind of education which should be given to women ; whether it is right for us to adopt in regard to them the same courses of study as for men, or whether the way in which they have to contribute to the social upbuilding demands some kind of revision of courses which are generally adopted for men are matters for your serious consideration. We know that the keenness of the problem of unemployment in western countries subsequent to the war is to some extent due to the displacement of men by women. It is necessary for us to guard against the repetition of the troubles which are prevailing today in other countries. I recognise that there are some professions where women are better suited than men with their intimate sympathy for the childmind, for the sick and the suffering. Women with their natural instincts and temperamental characteristics will prove better teachers of the young in the lower stages than men. In the great profession to which I have the honour to belong, one large part, nursing, may be completely set apart as the special sphere of the women. In a country, naturally conservative like ours, women graduates in Medicine can never be regarded as superfluous. The larger their numbers, the better for us. The careers of Bacteriologist, Pathologist, Radiologist, Oculist, Optician, Laboratory Assistant, Librarian, Stenographer, Telephone Operator, house manager, are some of those which will open up suitable occupations for a large number of women who do not wish to marry. But, pray, do not misunderstand me if I point out that the great career, and the natural career, for women is home and motherhood. "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth" is the divine object for women. I do not see why it is considered a greater service to humanity to earn Rs. 50 or even Rs. 2,500 a month than run a happy home and look after the bearing and rearing of children and be the moral force and inspiration behind the ideals and aspirations and struggles of man ; and if motherhood is not vouchsafed to one, it is nobler to be a partner of one's

husband's joys and sorrows with selfless devotion. A race or a nation which discounts this natural healthy expression of women's life must be regarded as decadent. The other day, I read in the press that the present Dictator of Germany declared that women cannot have both careers and marriage. We may quarrel with Hitler's statements, with the policy which he is now adopting in his land, but there is an important truth which underlies this dictum of his. It is not possible for women to do their work efficiently in their offices and run their homes at the same time. One or other of these things is bound to be sacrificed by their dual allegiance. It is this sound principle that underlies the practice in the Women's Superior Medical Service, that married women should not be entertained on the staff.

#### CO-EDUCATION

Another question that generally provokes legitimate difference of opinion is that of co-education. In these days of the onset of democracy, a good theoretical case can be made out for co-education in all stages. But in a country like ours, with its rooted traditions and conservative instincts, perhaps, it is wiser to be more cautious. The best scheme would perhaps be to have co-education in the early stages, kindergarten and primary, when the boys and the girls are not more than about 9 or 10 years of age, and separate them from their 10th year until they grow mature and self-confident and capable of thinking and judging for themselves. I would have said that there might be co-education only in the post-graduate classes, but perhaps, it may not be unwise to have co-education, in the graduate classes also, but certainly it should not be adopted in any other stage, not even in the Intermediate classes. Co-education in the graduate and post-graduate stages will be a preparation for actual life where men and women are thrown together in their professional and other activities. I am suggesting this not only as the result of my knowledge and experience in India but from my acquaintance and large experience with other countries also.

In medical education, however, I am a great believer in giving men and women the same opportunities of learning together and of being examined by identical tests. It would be disastrous for many an Indian home if, prompted by mistaken ideas of chivalry, we allow women students to pass medical examinations by the application of an easier standard of practical tests as compared to men students.

Times are changing rapidly. The impact of western culture is upsetting our old customs and social institutions. Caste restrictions are disappearing. The marriageable age of girls has been raised. There are unmistakable signs of strengthening of public opinion in favour of widow-remarriage and abolition of the purdah system."

Amidst the conflicting currents the drift of which it is difficult to foresee, there is one perceptible strain in the stream, one undeviated purpose slowly but surely evolving from the present, and that is the unshackling of the womanhood of India from the chains of the past. In the future our women will play an increasingly important part in social life, in the progress and the transformation of our ideals. They will indeed be the chief executive officers for propagating our ideas of health, hygiene and social advancement. Such steps as we take now will bear fruit in times to come and therefore it is the duty of our leader, men and especially women, amongst whom I hope to see an increasingly large number of our women graduates and educated people, to take a forward step with full responsibility and with the knowledge that whatever we do to-day will guide the welfare and happiness of generations to come. Here the aspirations of all communities are to be one, here the claims of climate, religion and social authority should be foregone in the unity of an undivided aim. It is to this future that I invite you to look, to this hope to turn for consolation, to this goal to consecrate your efforts.

#### DEMOCRACY

The question of equality in education of man and woman takes me to the larger issue of democracy. Till the other day, we thought that the greatest contribution of western nations in the matter of political organisation is the institution of democracy. But to-day, some of the progressive and powerful western nations have abandoned democracy and are adopting modified autocratic forms of government which critics call tyranny and dictatorship. They felt that government by talk and discussion with large bodies does not make for speedy and efficient action. When

we are face to face with large problems such as general unemployment, low agricultural prices and militant nationalism, it is not possible for us to sit and discuss ways and means at inordinate length in council chambers. The sands of time are running out, and action becomes imperative, and deliberation is naturally slow. A democracy lives generally if it puts in power an aristocracy not of birth but of intellect and morals. In Great Britain, democracy is successful simply because it is controlled by elected leaders in whom it has trust and who decide for the people in all emergencies. The leadership of the best is the only practicable and desirable method of public administration. Such a tradition has been in consonance with the past of India where the Brahmin was held supreme, not because he was born a Brahmin, but because, with his rich background of education, culture and experience, he was fitted to guide the growth of the community. It is also in consonance with the doctrine of Plato of the guardian in his *Republic*, where the guardians were expected to guide the affairs of the State in the light of their past ideals and disinterested manner. Wisdom and disinterestedness, Jnana and Tyaga, must be the two features. Wisdom and disinterestedness must be the qualities possessed by those who claim to lead the community. It is the wisdom of the Upanishads. It is the wisdom of Plato. It is the practical wisdom of the British State, where people enjoy a greater security of life and freedom of speech than in any avowedly Republican State and I am glad to be able to say, it is the great example we find in this State of Mysore.

#### INEFFICIENCY AND PHYSICAL FITNESS

Much of the backwardness and inefficiency of our people might be directly traced to the lack of their physical fitness. On account of their low vitality, they fall easy victims to infectious diseases and there is a constant drain on their poor reserve of vitality. Great attention will have to be paid in schools and colleges to the building up of the physical manhood of the country. Physical fitness is, to my mind, the first condition of intellectual efficiency and mental alertness. Even though the direct task of the University is the intellectual training of the students who go to its doors, it is essential that equal attention should be paid to the physical welfare of our young men and outlets provided for their energy in the domain of healthy recreations, manly games and sports and also amateur theatrical performances and musical entertainments. It is a pleasure for me to know that in your University these extra academic pursuits are well looked after and with the facilities which the country provides, it should be possible to further develop this side of the University's life. Long excursions are now becoming more popular and fashionable in western countries, and in Mysore with its salubrious climate, such excursions might occasionally be arranged, and students encouraged to take to them. The Krishnarajasagara and other beautiful and wide expanse of water afford ample opportunities for developing a University Rowing Club. With your own State Army, which provides a career for your young men, it must be possible for you to organise on a large scale a University Training Corps, which not only gives students physical training but trains them in habits of obedience, team work and discipline. In these days when aviation is being newly introduced into our country, it is our young men who, as the natural leaders of the community, should take a prominent part in this enterprise. Perhaps, it may not be easy to start an Aviation Club immediately, but as soon as finances permit, a Civil Aviation Officers' University Training Corps might be started and it will be the first of its kind.

While I am on this subject, I may be pardoned for drawing attention to a lopsided development of the physical aspect, which is now becoming more attractive in some parts of the country. There are institutions which specialise in teaching young men the art of muscular control and muscular development and physical endurance. While physical fitness is essential, while physical and muscular development undertaken on scientific lines will develop one's muscles and keep one's body light and one's limbs supple, exhibitions of one-sided and unscientific physical development for spectacular purposes cannot be too strongly condemned. Those who indulge in such exhibitions are liable to become heavy and muscle-bound and fall victims to heart diseases after a certain age.

#### VERNACULAR AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

Sir Asutosh Mukherjee was very anxious for the development of the vernacular language and in his Convocation address there also advocated its adoption. I have

tried to follow this ideal and it was my privilege to be able to take some effective steps to make vernacular as the medium of instruction up to the Matriculation standard in the Calcutta University. I therefore trust that I shall not be misunderstood when I say that while I appreciate the worthiness of this scheme as a means of easily learning a foreign language and as a patriotic desire to enrich and encourage the development of one's own mother tongue, we should not at the same time make a fetish of it. The world has become small and India cannot remain isolated any more. We are bound to take our place in the world economy and any tendency in Universities to neglect the use of the English language out of false pride and false ideas of patriotism, is bound to tell on our own usefulness and progress and position in the world of thought and life. English is the language which opens to us the treasures of modern science and criticism. It is the language by which we are able to put ourselves in touch with the other nations of the world. For purposes of business and commerce, we require language that is spoken practically over the whole world. And it would be a bad day for us if we should in any manner lower our standard of teaching and knowledge in English. By all means, develop the vernacular, but do not do so at the cost of a thorough and good knowledge of English.

I would like to mention that the system of Readership Lectures has placed the University of Calcutta in a position to invite scholars from abroad from time to time to deliver short courses of lectures. Perhaps, something more effective than these occasional lectures will have to be developed in the near future and a regular exchange of students and of professors established between the different Universities in India and overseas, British and Foreign. In this way, a direct and continuous cultural contact can be established between different Universities. I feel that the beauty of your country, its arts and craft, its rich background of ancient culture and learning will make it a very suitable place for the establishment of such a centre.

#### HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Before I sit down, I wish to tell you that your country at the moment needs men who have not merely education, not merely knowledge or learning, but sympathy and humanity born of true culture. Nothing depresses me more than the phenomenon which, alas, is increasing in its proportions, the phenomenon of graduates, of products of our Universities, who have won the highest distinctions and passed the highest examinations, and sometimes men of mature years like lecturers and professors, subordinating all their learning and knowledge to the petty ends of their own self for gaining applause and cheap popularity or the sinister interests of their own community. I can think of numbers of sadhus and sufis, men belonging to all creeds and communities, who have the strength to subordinate their petty interests to the public good and hold aloft the vision of one family on earth under God's Rule. There are men and women in this land who do not possess University degrees, who cannot mouth the modern catch-words of progress, democracy, etc.; but who are still endowed with that natural sympathy for mankind, regardless of caste, creed or community. They are truly more cultured than the University titled men who fly the banners of their particular communities. Unfortunately for our country at the moment, when political freedom is dawning on us, when questions of Indian self-government have come to occupy not the regions of dreams but the centre of practical politics, we are trying to open old sores and exaggerate animosities and antagonisms and thus postpone the achievement of the dream of our statesmen. Communal differences particularly between Hindus and Mussalmans are being revived for the sake of political ends. It is forgotten that there were great periods of Indian History when the Hindu and the Mussalman lived side by side in perfect amity and concord, thoroughly appreciative of each other's cultures, and expressing their traditions in a blend of both, which are even to-day matters of pride to Indians as a nation. Look at the products of the Art and Architecture expressive of the synthesis of the Hindu and the Mussalman, which are to be found in North India, especially in Agra and Delhi which have survived the ravages of time and compelled the respect and admiration of the world. Before there can be Hindu-Muslim unity on the political side, there should be intellectual sympathy and co-operation between the two cultures. On the same ideal and cultural plane, affinities and sympathies require to be fostered with great care and delicacy. Intellectual understanding is the basis of



all political unity and I do not suppose it is necessary for me in this State to refer to that fact, since you have in your Chancellor, a devout Hindu, who, at the same time, has great sympathy and appreciation of the cultures of the Mussalmans and the Christians. If only his example is followed by each one of you, you will bring nearer the realisation of our political ideals. I do hope that when you enter life and are called upon to take your part in the control and administration of public affairs, you will not betray the cause of your own country's freedom or national unity. Your Vice-Chancellor in recommending you for the degrees has to-day charged you "that in your life and conversation you may prove yourself worthy of the same." I put to you this challenge whether in your daily lives, by your spoken word or silent deed, you will stand up, even on self-sacrifice, for the cause of India, our motherland, or betray your ideal in becoming partisans of a petty creed or community. Let each one answer to himself.

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## The Allahabad University Convocation

The following is a summary of the address delivered by *Dr. Sir S. Radhakrishnan* at the Convocation of the Allahabad University held on the 13th. November 1934 :—

Let me express my grateful appreciation of the kind thought which your authorities had for me in asking me to come here and give the address. Though I know from experience that a Convocation addressed intended for the students who are leaving the University is no easy task, yet it gives me the chance of meeting a large gathering of scholars and students, a great temptation for one who has been a teacher for a large part of life. If I am here this evening, it is due to a strict adherence to the maxim which has long been in practice, though recently exalted into the rank of philosophy, that the best way of getting over a temptation is by quietly yielding to it.

### UNEMPLOYMENT

In conformity with tradition, let me offer my hearty congratulations to you who have received degrees to-day. You have successfully completed the prescribed courses of study and are now looking forward to your work in life for which the University training has been a preparation. Latterly, the lack of adjustment between the needs of life and studies in the University has come in for a good deal of comment and criticism that it is unnecessary for me to draw your attention to it. If I tell you, young men and women, that you will have soft jobs and great careers awaiting you, now that you have acquired University degrees it will be rousing hopes that are destined to disappointment. Unemployment is the lot of many University men the world over. There is something wrong about a system which turns out men who are not wanted in the society which had paid for their training. It is not the function of Universities to produce an academic proletariat which is fed on idleness and so develops mental flabbiness and neurasthenia. The responsibility for this state of affairs is not merely in the educational system but also in the economic situation. You are not accountable for either. But it is a healthy sign that there is a remarkable agreement among educationists to-day that the system of education requires drastic revision from the foundation to the flagpole. It is out of date and unsuited to modern conditions and involves a colossal waste of intellect and energy.

### REFORM OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

In all its stages, Primary, Secondary and University, a reorientation is necessary. While any member of the general community is entitled to the minimum of education, at any rate, to the Primary standard if he is to function as a unit in a democratic state, the large numbers who constitute the mainstay of any society, the peasants working on the soil and the skilled workers engaged in industries require to be looked after in the Secondary schools. Secondary education is the



weakest link in our system. It is dominated exclusively by the University requirements. It must provide a type of education which is complete in itself, enabling those who have benefitted by it to take up a position in life. It must therefore be so organised as to give a general cultural standard to the bulk of the population and enable them, at the same time, to face the varied requirements of practical life. It must not be its exclusive aim to prepare candidates for University studies. The value of University education is considerably impaired by the presence in the University of men who are unfit for higher literary or scientific education. The technical schools should train our youths not merely for urban occupations, because the country is fundamentally rural. Agriculture is the foundation of Indian life and will continue to be so for a long time to come.

Today, with the low agricultural prices, our farmers who are the producers of wealth in our land, are unable to get enough food for themselves out of the soil they cultivate. In more favourable circumstances, they have a very small surplus to self. So long as we continue to cultivate our fields with the tools of a past age, the bent stick and the wooden plough, the yield from the soil cannot be increased. If there is to be any improvement, agricultural training suited to our rural conditions is essential. A large number of agricultural schools, small in size and limited in scope, require to be established. Besides, our farmers are generally engaged in some subsidiary industry during the intervals of leisure which field-work involves. In former days, spinning and weaving were the subsidiary industries. Gandhiji's attempt to revive them is not a madman's dream. Technical schools where training can be given in industries which can be carried on in small workshops are most urgently needed.

The Universities should be called upon to produce a higher intellectual class, not only willing subordinates but responsible leaders, who will fill important and influential positions in the liberal professions, in the great industries and in public life. They must pay special attention in technological institutes to research in subjects relating to agriculture and industries.

#### LEADERSHIP

Besides teaching and research, the training of leaders, is an essential function of the University. To-day there is no lack of moral energy or disinterestedness but it is taking unnatural shapes on account of wrong direction. The responsibility of the intellectuals, the natural leaders of thought and life, is immense. The anxious preoccupation, of the statesmen of all countries at the present moment when competing social, economic and political views are in the field, raises questions of fundamental importance. The issues involved are vital to every interest both of the individual and of humanity. Universities which have for their function the conserving and dispensing of the best traditions of human thought and conduct are deeply affected by the great moral issues about the first principles of social organization, which these questions raise.

#### DEMOCRACY AND DICTATORSHIP

Mazzini defined democracy "as the progress all through under the leadership of the wisest and the best". A democracy fails if the people are not sufficiently enlightened to be able to select wise and intelligent leaders. The leaders to-day are neither wise nor intelligent. Scepticism and selfishness are their chief characteristics. They are supported by the rapacity of profiteers, the apathy of the masses, the faint-hearted servility of the intellectuals who make themselves the advocates of devastating prejudices which it should be their mission to uproot. Without any clear vision of humanity's goal, our leaders set forth programmes which they value more than the lives of their fellowmen. They will not hesitate to send millions to death to prove themselves in the right. Their own particular purposes should be achieved by any means, however barbarous or inhuman.

We are witness to-day of the terrible sinister portent that some of the progressive nations of the West whose names are synonymous with civilization are embarking with cynical deliberation on a course which is in conflict not so much with the high injunctions of the religions they profess, but the most elementary dictates of natural justice and humanity. In a large part of Europe, democracy which was for long considered the great contribution of Europe to world's political thought is now abandoned. Parliamentary government is killed, the press is muzzled, freedom of thought, of speech and of assembly is forbidden. The ordinary decencies of

public life, the conventions which raise human society above a pack of animals, the bonds of personal loyalty and friendship are being swept away by groups who neither respect laws nor recognise the common obligations of humanity. The zeal of the dictators shrinks at nothing, not even carefully planned and cold-blooded murders of political opponents.

The obvious incompetence of governments to deal in a just and effective way with the problem of economic inequality is the cause of the discontent with democracy and this discontent has carried dictators to power. Unimpeded freedom of trade resulted in the exploitation of man by his fellows. The demand for greater economic equality was resented by the vested interests and class conflicts developed. Regulation of private industry on a large scale was undertaken by the governments but not as rapidly as one would desire. Economic effort was therefore put under political direction. Peaceful evolution which is the method of democracy yielded to forcible revolution.

Compulsion thus became the controlling principle of social, economic and political life. If there is a restriction of personal liberty and a denial of opportunities for a full, satisfying, noble life, it only, means that economic justice and security ask for their price. The price has been paid in many countries but they are not nearer the goal. The new slavery for mankind has not resulted in economic justice and security.

#### MILITARISM

Selfish and suspicious units which constitute the present politically and economically unorganised world have raised tariff walls which naturally increase personal rivalries and bitterness. It is a state of constant continuous economic struggle. Those who believe in force for their internal affairs have no hesitation in adopting it in their foreign relations. Militarism is now in the ascendant. Might is to-day more right than ever. Our dictators are all sabre-rattlers and scare-mongers. They tax the sweat and blood of innocent people in order to maintain armaments. Nations are fed on a diet of blood and iron. Italy is busy turning a people into an army. The boys of Italy are to be prepared "spiritually, physically and militarily" for the profession of arms. Germany and Austria, Russia and France, even Great Britain, are piling up preparations for war, while their Governments declare that they desire peace. Defending the increased Air Estimates in the House of Commons, Mr. Baldwin remarked that in future we must regard not the white cliffs of Dover but the left bank of the Rhine as our frontier. No one knows what exactly Baldwin meant and it is doubtful whether he himself knew. But the French took the words to mean that England was at last about to agree to a military alliance with France and they can always quote Baldwin.

#### POWERS OF DARKNESS

The powers of darkness are gathering in every direction. The nations of Europe are drifting towards war with all its incalculable horrors. The next war will be fought largely from the air and it will be much more pitiless, indiscriminating and descriptive than anything in the previous history of warfare. It is admitted that there is no defence against air attack. One can only retaliate. Invasion by an army could be repelled by ranging a sufficiently strong force against it. So also with blockade by a fleet. But there is no reliable defence against a raid by bombing aeroplanes. However large our flying force may be, a much smaller one could deliver a blow, a blow levelled straight against the civilian population, old and young, women and children, hospitals and nurseries.

New conditions challenge us to restate the aims, revise the methods and reshape the system of university education. Our purpose hitherto has been to impart university education to as many as are willing to receive it. Our methods have therefore necessarily been those best suited to mass production. But it followed that the best brains of the country have been neglected and consequently our universities have failed to produce in sufficient number leaders fit to cope with the problems—national, provincial and even local—of the country's social and political life."

# The Agra University Convocation

Mr. A. H. Mackenzie, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the Osmania University, in the course of his Convocation Address at the Agra University held at Agra on the 17th. November, 1934 said :—

To make available to young men and women the knowledge that has been accumulated by past ages falls far short of what our purpose should be in the critical days of hope and opportunity that are almost upon us. We must define our university aims in terms of to-morrow. The country now looks to us consciously and deliberately to develop the powers of those who have the capacity for leadership. We may not by any process of formal education be able to produce great personalities. But we can with some hope of success aim at producing a great community—men and women who have been disciplined in mind and character, who are inspired by ideals of willing service, who have the initiative and efficiency for leadership and who by the soundness of their judgment are fit to mould public opinion in accordance with their own ideals.

"The fate and fortunes of every people", said the Calcutta University Commission, "depend upon the opportunities which it affords to its ablest sons, who must be the leaders and guides of the next generation in every field of national activity. If their minds are sterilised, if their intellectual growth is starved and stunted, the nation will as surely suffer as it will if it neglects the material resources which Nature has bestowed upon it". Thus the work in a university must be exacting and strenuous. Its class-rooms must be places where thought is active and is applied to use, where self-reliance is developed, where the creative faculties are strengthened and where balanced minds are formed.

What is the reality? The prevailing method is for teachers to do the thinking for the students. The most popular lecturer is he who confines himself strictly to the course and whose summaries are so skilfully made that the students need not even read the prescribed text-books. In post-graduate classes, in which smaller numbers make it possible to preserve human contact between teacher and taught, self-reliance and wide reading are encouraged and in some colleges and teaching universities an effect is being made by means of tutorial classes to develop powers of independent thought and criticism. But usually university lectures do not simulate thought, they are a substitute for thought. Through the study of English literature there is an opportunity for developing the love of reading for its own sake and thus giving all students on the Arts side a pure and abiding pleasure.

Yet the prevailing method of teaching is to convert a masterpiece of literature into a horrible mess of synonyms and paraphrases of which the permanent effect may be judged from the fact that in this province of five universities there is not a sufficient demand for literature to support a single book-shop, as the term is understood in university towns of the West.

The end of the study of literature at our universities is for most students a release from it. The study of Science involves independent practical work and therefore demands self-effort, but even in our laboratories it is common to find students carrying out experiments mechanically according to directions which select the subjects for investigation, give detailed instructions regarding the methods of work and leave the students nothing to do besides the taking of observations.

The fault lies in our system of education. We have provided in our secondary institutions a predominantly literary education which can lead only to more literary education. Accordingly many students drift into university courses for which they are unfitted because there is no other type of higher education open to them. The colleges have to make the best of conditions as they find them—classes clogged with students who have no aptitude for higher literary and scientific study. The lecturer cannot give of his best or stimulate the interest and curiosity of his students; he rightly thinks it unfair to leave half of his class behind. He must keep to the dry and dusty road which leads to success in examinations. Attempts by students of more than average ability to find pleasure and delight by exploring the country on either side must be discouraged; these excursions hamper the

teacher's efforts to help the duller ones to reach the journey's end. Thus the teacher is compelled by force of circumstances to adopt the only method of instruction that will meet the case—to do the thinking for his students and present the subject of study in the form of dictated notes.

These criticism apply, though to less degree, to some universities in the West also. The first remedy suggested is a drastic selection of students. "It is the cant of democracy," says a critic of Western universities, "to talk as though the bulk of the people are fitted to receive university education and should have it as soon as it can be provided. The universities should be only for the really intelligent and these are a small proportion of the total population." Similar views have been expressed by the Principal of the University of St. Andrews, the oldest university in Scotland. "The power of leadership," he said, "is greatest when coupled with the wisdom and understanding the universities strive to provide, and I often wonder if our present methods, in which we attempt to ignore the biological law that the efficiency of the few is secured by the sacrifice of the many, are more likely to lead to produce the particular men the world requires."

But the process of elimination involves the overhauling and reconstruction of our system of secondary education. We cannot adopt the easy remedy of stiffening the standards of university examinations. It is not equitable that those who desire to receive education beyond the secondary school stage should be denied facilities for higher education merely because they are unfit for university studies. Many of them have other aptitudes for which scope must be found by providing for them training which will equip them for useful and honourable careers in the industrial, commercial and agricultural life of the country. The problem cannot be solved by Government or the Education Department alone. The Ministry of Education in the United Provinces have therefore recently issued a resolution in which they have invited the public to co-operate with them in finding a solution.

#### SEARCH FOR TRUTH

The elimination of the unfit will not in itself be a reform of university education. It is only one of the essential conditions of reform. Reform is possible only if we are clear about our aims and constantly bring our methods to the test whether or not they help us to achieve our purpose. There are many definitions of university aims, but all may be summed up in these words—the search for truth. A university at its best expresses in its administration, curriculum, methods of teaching and in all its activities the desire of men to pursue the truth for truth's sake.

Let us first ask to what extent the pursuit of truth is deliberately stimulated by our university bodies. Unfortunately they are too busy with other matters. The authorities of all our universities, teaching as well as affiliating, devote most of their time and energy to purely formal business. Teachers have a passion for meetings, where they engage in endless discussions regarding regulations, which thus tend to become more and more elaborate. Yet, as Professor Zimmern has said, there is no department of human activity where the heavy administrative methods of large scale enterprise are less at home or defeat their purpose more completely. What may be efficiency in the one region becomes an encumbrance in the other. When teachers are absorbed in the working of the machine they can give little time or attention to questions of educational policy which express the spirit and ideals of the university.

#### PROBLEM OF CURRICULUM

The most important of these is the curriculum. It seems to be assumed that there must and can be only one form of curriculum—a list of subjects from which the students may, with some slight restriction, choose any three. Such a curriculum is without design or coherence and is based on no intelligible principle. If there is an underlying theory it is the false one that it does not matter what subjects the undergraduate studies as long as he studies three, however grotesquely unrelated they may be. If we wish university education to train for citizenship the curriculum must be carefully designed for that purpose. But our present curriculum is a preparation not for life but for examinations controlled by the Public Service Commission and other external examining bodies. Therefore the graduates who are being sent forth to enrich the public life of the country are being trained along lines of narrow specialism—Science graduates who are wholly ignorant of the record of human thought and feeling and Arts graduates who have not the most elementary equipment to enable them to understand the wonder and meaning of life. These



defects are not peculiar to the Agra University or even to Indian universities in general. Complaint is made that in Universities of the West also subjects are treated as ends in themselves and not as elements in a larger synthesis, and that degrees are awarded after an examination which is designed to test knowledge gained almost entirely by means of unremitting industry and the application of memory to a limited set of facts. A well informed critic (Alderton Pink: "If the blind lead.") of Western universities says that in some universities of the West there is no unifying aim, that "in the true sense of the word there is no curriculum," there is just "an assortment of educationally purposeless courses based on specialised work in single subjects." He has, therefore, suggested that the rigid demarcation between Arts and Science should be broken down and that the curriculum should consist not of alternative subjects but of alternative groups of correlated studies bearing on the needs of society and aiming at initiating young people into what is vital in the knowledge and thought of our time and thus equipping them for the social leadership for which their abilities fit them. H. G. Wells, who contemptuously describes the Arts course in universities as "merely a wasteful prolongation of puerility" has advocated an even more drastic reconstruction of the curriculum. I mention these suggestions not to endorse them in detail but to emphasise first that there is a problem of the curriculum and secondly that it has not yet been solved satisfactorily even in the older universities of the West. Our Indian universities have been, with almost pathetic eagerness, imitative of Western institutions. Here is an opportunity of repaying their debt by making their own contribution to the solution of a question of vital importance to universities all the world over.

#### TEACHING AND RESEARCH

Another problem for university teachers, perhaps next in importance to the question of the curriculum, is how to strike a balance between teaching and research. Extension of the bounds of knowledge is the search for truth and therefore must by our definition be one of the primary aims of any university. But let us beware of pretence and humbug masquerading as truth. Of some of the research work done at Western universities, it has been said by one who is competent to judge: "Anyone who takes the trouble to run through the titles of theses deposited in university libraries or printed by university presses must be applied by the amount of effort there revealed. Those who are in charge of this sort of work know very well that the field in which profitable research can be done by the novice is very limited and in some directions already exhausted; yet they continue to encourage students to pursue the depressing task of borrowing through rubbish heaps to the degree of Ph.D". I hasten, however, to add that this is not a fair valuation of every research degree and that even "an elaborately documented dissertation on an obscure matter" however dull it may appear to be is possibly a key to new regions of thought. What I wish to stress is that in our colleges and universities research work which is divorced from teaching has little educational value; but its influence is great if it keeps alive the teacher's enthusiasm for his subject and if the more advanced students are allowed to share in it and thus realize that if they are to love truth they must be prepared to win her by patient investigation and serve her by strenuous work. In some of our universities, notably at Allahabad and Lucknow in these provinces, research work of first rate quality and educational value has completely altered the tone of some teaching departments. In the colleges of an affiliating university we have neither the staff nor the equipment for such research work of this kind. But what matters more than research work in teaching departments is the spirit of the researchers. The teacher may reveal this spirit even when he is dealing with knowledge centuries old, provided that he imparts it in such a way as to stir the imagination of students and train them to test it, utilize it, turn it to the principles which are true for all time. Who can doubt that all the time. Who can doubt that the influence for good of such a teacher, whatever his subject may be, is for university purposes of infinitely greater value than that of the researcher who shuts himself up in his laboratory and by a process of patient distillation adds one more to the infinite series of compounds of Carbon, Hydrogen and Oxygen?

#### PROBLEM OF TEACHING TECHNIQUE

Lastly, there is the problem of teaching technique. In recent years there has been considerable improvement in methods of teaching in schools. But university



professors have curiously a scorn of discussion regarding the methods by which they should do their daily work. Alone amongst professional men they give no sustained thought for the technique of their craft. I confess that the pedagogue is the bore of all bores ; and I submit that he makes up a large part of my own composition. I shall not, however, abuse my present position by permitting him to speak. I would only indicate some of the questions which are of vital importance to university teachers and which, as a body, they have never answered because they have never asked them : How can literature be taught as a study of life, as cultivation of the imagination and as revelation of the beauty of form, fitness of phrase and music of language ? How can knowledge—the meanings of words and sentences and the relations of parts to each other and to the whole—be imparted without destroying pleasure and beauty, which are evanescent under analysis ? By what methods can the student of History be trained to investigate causes and measure effects, analyse motives, deduce influences from established data and distinguish between the essential and the accidental ? How can the teacher of Economics make the study more real by building a bridge between the theory of the class-room and practical life ? How can staff and students render through this subject a service to the community by applying it to Indian needs ? How should Mathematics be taught so that apart from its value as an instrument for use it may be a training intellectual precision and self-reliance ? Why with all our expenditure on university and college departments of Science we do not produce more graduates with scientific minds—men who think for themselves, who weigh evidence, who, in Faraday's phrase, are not biassed by appearances, have no favourite hypothesis, are of no school and in doctrine have no master ? In a word, by what methods of teaching can we in every subject fulfil the aim of the University, by training students to search for the truth, hold it in their hearts, discern it in their thoughts and live it in their lives ?

My final word is to express on behalf of all officers, teachers and friends of the University our good wishes to you, the graduates of to-day. You deserve success. You have an innate courtesy and good humour which make teaching in the colleges of the University a delight. You have shown industry, grit and perseverance and many of you also great courage in obtaining university education at the cost of privation and even suffering. You are going forth now to the great arena of the outside world. How are you to be distinguished there from other educated men who are not university graduates ? In what sense is each of you to prove worthy of his degree ? Not by what he knows, but what he is : one who is humble in mind and yet does not accept opinions from the daily press or from the assertions of others until he has tried and tested them, who probes into catch-words and fine phrases and faces facts ; one who throughout his life, in his daily duties and in association with his fellows, by honesty of thought, integrity of conduct and thoroughness of work, is steadily and surely building for himself a ship of truth—

“In which his soul may sail—  
Sail on the sea of death,  
For death takes toll  
Of beauty, courage, youth,  
Of all but truth.”

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## The Patna University Convocation

Mr. Justice *Khaja Mohammad Noor*, Vice-Chancellor of the Patna University, in the course of his Convocation Speech delivered at Patna on the 24th. November 1934 said :—

‘University education must by its very nature to a large extent be cultural and it must pre-eminently produce men who by their research and devotion may be able by their contribution to add to the knowledge and culture of humanity. Whatever may be the defect of the present system, I can confidently say that the general education now imparted in the university is producing a body of young men who equipped by their training can make themselves useful in various spheres.

Mr. Justice Noor congratulating the new graduates said : 'On my own behalf and on behalf of the University I congratulate you on your success and wish you godspeed. After leaving the portals of this University you are about to enter the University of Life and face its diverse and complicated problems. Many of you will be faced with the question of selecting a future career. During these days of world-wide economic depression, unemployment among the educated youths of the country must have been agitating your mind. The only advice I can give you is to face it with patience, perseverance and good spirit. The universities, particularly of this country, are being subjected to a very severe criticism and it is said that the education which we have been able to impart to you is not suited to your requirements. The dissatisfaction is universal but the solution is not so easy as some of the critics think it to be. It is said that a university should take up technical and vocational education. Some universities have made a beginning, and with us it is a question of funds. It is, however, not sometimes recognised that simply opening technological classes in the universities will not solve the problem of unemployment. If the universities of India have not solved the problem of unemployment, they have produced men who are educating public opinion for its solution. Correct thinking is the first step towards the achievement of the object. Specialised education without taking stock of its demand will make the distress more acute.

'It is generally acknowledged that the solution of the problem does not lie in the reform of university education but also in the economic development of the country which will open more avenues for the employment of the educated youths of the country. This is not a problem which a university alone can solve. It is to be solved by the combined effort of the people and the Government. The universities will certainly have to make their own contribution. We have been able to impart to you what we believe a sound general education which if you only rightly use it, will enable you to adapt yourselves to varying conditions of life which will face you.

Continuing he said : 'But I will tell you one thing. Will you wait till the economic development of the country finds a career for you ? Will you not make a start for yourself ? Some of you at any rate, I am sure, can command a little capital. Your general education is at your disposal. Any technical knowledge needed can be acquired if you want it or you can combine with those who have it. I would urge upon you to think whether some of you at least cannot start a small industry yourself and keep yourself engaged instead of running about from door to door to seek a comparatively low paid service. Others who are in a position to do so may think of leading a village life as Dr. Paranjpye impressed upon the Convocation last year. The co-operative movement on which much of the economic development of the peasantry depends is suffering for want of educated workers in the villages. Will not some of you who can afford to do so, go and live among the villagers and take up this philanthropic work of village uplift which in the end will achieve the object of the economic prosperity of the country which all of us have in view ? Think, decide and act.'

## The Lucknow University Convocation

His Excellency *Sir Malcolm Hailey*, Chancellor, addressing the Convocation of the Lucknow University at Lucknow on the 26th. November 1934, declared :—

"I believe that it is only in alliance with the form of culture which is tolerant of every variety of thought or custom save that which offends the spirit of liberty that India can find the fulfilment of her best self and give all her peoples that great future for which we all alike pray. Is all that we are doing here and in other centres of higher education ; is, indeed, all the trend of the type of culture to which we have now been devoting ourselves for some years, in truth anti-national ?" he inquired of his audience. "Indeed the recent course of the world has been such that in many countries the sole test applied to any policy or any cultural development is its capacity for satisfying what is held to be the national genius or character. If India were to decide in its own mind that the type of culture largely determined by external influences is anti-national, then that form of culture will have against it not only the natural

difficulty inherent in its transplantation to a different soil, but all active hostility which flows from an intensified nationalistic feeling. Whatever view one may take of the manner in which the merits of foreign rule are canvassed or of some of the methods whereby it is sought to reduce its authority, yet the desire to be more independent of that rule is natural enough. Certainly, it would be illogical if Englishmen remembering how much of their own history and how much of their feelings they have taught India, were to regard it as unjustifiable'.

"In seeking to spread among them institutions and ideas which seemed to have been successful in Europe," his Excellency proceeded, "there was at least a sincere and honest attempt to give the East what had appeared as best to the West. That attempt, moreover, had secured, as the whole world admits, for India an immense advance not only in material and social circumstances but in every condition that makes towards nationhood".

Continuing, his Excellency said: 'I do not believe that any thinking Indian really believes that the achievements of Europe in literature, philosophy and art are negligible and the achievement of India supreme. I, in fairness, ought to make one observation which is perhaps also a warning. In altering circumstances, feelings based on political or economic considerations may well abate and changing relations may well bring a recognition that it is unnecessary to set up any such defence against the assumption of Indian inferiority. But unless it is aggravated by the continuance of the factors I still cannot myself believe that it is likely to take a form directly subversive of the European type of culture. One must expect an increasing stimulus to be given to the literature of Indian languages such as has already taken place in regard to Bengali and to some extent to Urdu and Hindi. There will naturally be a far more emphasis on education in the languages of the country.

'I need not emphasise the truth that every national renaissance has brought with it an intense revival of interest in the language, life, history and art of the people of the country. It would not be a true renaissance if it did not seek to give them a new life in the face of the foreign or exotic culture. That, however, does not imply that the nationalistic feeling, however intense it may become, must necessarily herald a movement for the exclusion or suppression of the Eastern type of culture. Indeed, the circumstances seem to forbid it here. India could not afford to deprive herself of one vehicle she now possesses for common expression in matters of politics, science or business. Nor would it now be possible to break with all associations flowing from the use of our literature and modes of thought. They have gone too far and sunk too deep.

'Nationalistic feelings in some of their later manifestations have been apt to show themselves impatient and intolerant to an extent which would have surprised the most intolerant of our ancestors. There are modern States which, setting out, assert economic self-sufficiency or achieve racial or cultural unity and seem capable of being hag-ridden by the desire to smash down any show of difference of opinion and regiment every aspect of individual life. The press is silenced, the minorities banished or suppressed, teaching of philosophy and of history regulated by the State, censorship of public opinion is reduced to a mechanized mass mentality. The philosopher speaks all this as a new form of Caesarism. The historian might perhaps feel that this libels Augustus and even does some injustice to the more human vagaries of some of his successors'.

In conclusion, his Excellency pointed out: 'Fate has brought you most closely into contact with that form of European thought which proved itself most resistant to these Caesaristic tendencies. Our confidence in our own modes of life and thought does not make us intolerant of the beliefs, customs and habits of others; our instinct is to reckon with contrary opinion instead of attempting to suppress it. We believe in allowing the fullest scope to individual life. We think it is in the fullness of individual life and not in the creation of a mass mentality that the true spirit of progress lies. If individual life is to be controlled we believe that it will be rather by general social influences than by sterile processes of State regulation. When the State itself acts it must be on the broad basis of general consent.'

Just before the conclusion of his address His Excellency referring to the new scheme of reforms said: 'Politicians here may hold their own views on the methods proposed in the new constitution for the grant of a fuller share in the control of her own destinies. But the philosopher will see in that constitution the Empire's challenge to the spirit of the world's new tyrannies. May India take up the gage and justify the faith which inspired that challenge.'

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# The Nagpur University Convocation

The eleventh Convocation of the Nagpur University was held at Nagpur on the 1st. December 1934, with His Excellency Sir Hyde Gowan in the chair. Dr. R. P. Paranjpye in the course of his address said :—

“Large masses of educated men are now-a-days idle for want of employment. A situation like this cannot be tackled satisfactorily unless well-considered action is taken in various directions. Thus, the Government can do a good deal by encouraging rapid economic development both in industries and agriculture. They can start now, or revive dying industries especially of the cottage type ; they can reserve legitimate national resources to our own nationals and not allow foreigners to exploit them ; they can encourage the greater use of Indian capital and labour, both skilled and unskilled in developing these resources ; they can provide facilities for the proper training of Indians for all grades of work required in these industries, they can take much fiscal, legislative and administrative measures as being taken by other National Governments for the benefit of their own subjects as reserving our coastal shipping traffic to Indian-owned concerns, confining Indian insurance business to Indian-owned Companies or purchasing, or even sometimes manufacturing such stores as it requires in the country itself ; they can recruit more Indians to those places where outsiders are now being appointed.

“But even with all these suggestions properly carried out, mere Governmental action cannot effect a permanent cure. An effort must be made to see that early in the career of a boy, there should be provided alternative courses of training which will lead to as honourable and respectable walks of life as those supposed to be rendered possible by a University degree. After all, every student is not fully suited for a purely intellectual education of the advanced type in Arts or Science. At present, he drifts on into it for want of alternatives and suitable advice. All grades of education are unconsciously so arranged as to lead everybody finally to the university and this causes an enormous waste of effort on the part of those who fail to complete their course and also unfits the successful for all but a few occupation.

“The last Universities Conference recommended a conscious and well-planned division of the educational course into four parts. Elementary (extending over five years) average age 6-11 ; Lower Secondary or Middle (extending over four years) average age 11-15 ; Higher Secondary (extending over three years) average age 15-18 ; and University (extending over at least three years).

“The education in the first two, if not three, grades should be through the vernacular and English, should be optionally taught in the second stage from a purely practical point of view and should be compulsory in the third stage only. There should be a formal certificate granted on the completion of each stage and there should be no formal examinations at any other point. The elementary stage should be compulsory for all children of both sexes and should concentrate on the acquisition of the three “R”s and ideas on various general subjects like history, geography, nature study should be conveyed indirectly through their ordinary reading-books. Some kind of manual training should be insisted on in every stage of education having alternative classes with different kinds of bias but on the whole such institutions will be generally of one character ; general subjects of a cultural character should have a prominent place in the curricula. In the third stage, there should be institutions of different types, agricultural, industrial, commercial, and general (Arts and Science) though a portion of the time even in the first three should continue to be devoted to purely cultural subjects. In these specialised institutions opportunities should, whenever possible, be given for practical training in addition to the theoretical. In the fourth stage, there would be the University with its various faculties, though each University need not aspire to have all possible faculties. The students admitted to the University should be of a higher calibre than at present so that University education will produce even better results than now. I attach special importance to the education of girls and I think that, while the first and fourth grades may ordinarily be taken in common



institutions, the second and third should be provided for in separate institutions for boys and girls.

"Our educational system has grown up so far without any conscious planning but present conditions have made clear the urgent need of a well-thought out scheme which will remedy existing difficulties.

"The educational authorities will be in a position to do this only if they are supported by intelligent public opinion ready to disregard vested interests when in conflict with the general plan, and also prepared to agree to increased expenditure for the starting of a sufficient number of specialised institutions."

## The Andhra University Convocation

Sir *Kurma Venkata Reddi*, Law Member to the Government of Madras, delivered the Convocation Address to the graduates of the Andhra University, at the Convocation held at Waltair on the 19th. December 1934. The following are extracts from his address :—

To me the Andhra University, as it is slowly rising in its beneficent glory and solid grandeur, is the rare realisation of one of the fondest dreams of my ardent youth. I was among the earliest advocates for the establishment of a University for Telugu Districts of the Madras Presidency, and when it was given to me to assist the Government in the Legislature in placing the Andhra University Act on the Statute Book in 1925-26, I laboured in all humbleness and with all my heart; and it was with no less heartiness that I discharged my duties as a member of the Senate and of the Syndicate in the early years of this University.

On this auspicious occasion among the degrees that have been conferred, the Honorary Doctorate on our retired Chancellor deserves special mention. This is not the place for an appreciation of Sir George Stanley's broad-minded statesmanship, generous and helpful sympathy for the legitimate aspirations of our countrymen, and unfailing solicitude for the welfare of the masses. This University owes a deep debt of gratitude to Sir George Stanley.

We offer a loyal and respectful welcome to the new Chancellor, His Excellency Lord Erskine. I am sure His Excellency will watch with tender solicitude and paternal care during his Chancellorship the outgrowing of this University from its childhood and its emergence into vigorous and healthy adolescence.

While passing, may I with your permission, pay my tribute of appreciation to your Pro-Chancellor, the Hon'ble the Rajasaheb of Bobbili who, in the period of rapid transition through which we are passing, has brought to bear upon the public life of this province the fine and generous qualities of a house whose martial glory in the past is the story of a soul-stirring ballad in our Telugu literature, and who is shaping and directing it to make the Presidency of ours, humanly speaking, a happy province where a genuine respect for law and order, an implicit desire to achieve political aims by constitutional methods, and a friendly feeling between the rulers and the ruled will be among its main features.

### [DEFECTS IN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

On occasions like this it is usual to dilate upon the ideals and purpose of education and to offer advice to the outgoing students. I do not propose to follow that course, even if I had the capacity to do so. I feel also disinclined to tender any advice to the graduates leaving the University as to how they should conduct themselves, how they should serve the country and the public, and what they should do and they should not. But may I observe here that at no time in the history of India was there a greater need than now for courage to face the problems of the age, devotion to the truest interests of the country, honour and unselfishness in public service, and for open and receptive minds to every new light? Your character has been moulded under your home influences and in your school-rooms and college-classes and any amount of exhortation from me on an occasion



like this may not improve matters. There are one or two drawbacks in our present educational system, however, to which I should like to make some reference.

#### OMISSION OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

The omission of religious instruction from school and college curricula is having a disastrous result. In the famous proclamation of Queen Victoria, out of the bountifulness of her grace and her great and impartial sense of justice, religious neutrality was promised to us; it was a well-meant definition of policy but singularly enough it has had unexpected and deleterious effects on the progress of our country. In the name of this religious neutrality urgent and imperative social reforms have been ignored and retarded. It is in the name of this religious neutrality that the consecrated nautch girl continues to ply her infamous trade and the Panchama—untouchable and oppressed—is left outside the pale of Hindu Society, a pitiable outcaste. To this day it is this religious neutrality that prevents legislation from being undertaken to admit non-caste Hindus into Hindu temples, despite the emphatic assertion that they belong to the Hindu fold. Not merely are reforms—so necessary because of the dictates of social justice—delayed and obstructed but the national character has not been elevated, and I regret to add, not formed! Lower moral standards are steadily creeping into all walks of our lives and there has been a regrettable and dangerous deterioration in the methods employed to attain our aims.

The next result of the exclusion of religious instruction from our educational system is that we Hindus have at present no religion worth mentioning. Religion as an inspiring, humbling and purifying faith—founded on the verities of life and satisfying its nobler cravings—is to-day unknown in our country in practice. Religion with us has ceased to be a living force. And yet India has always been regarded as a land of religions—the birthplace of two of the greatest religions of the world.

I earnestly appeal to the authorities of this University that at least in the educational institutions within the area of its jurisdiction religious instruction may be imparted. The principles and tenets of the three great religions—Hinduism, Islam and Christianity—should be taught from the earliest standards right upto the final University classes. A conscience clause may be provided for and such scholars whose parents are unwilling to allow them to attend religious classes will be at liberty to absent themselves from such classes. But those who are willing there must be provision for religious instruction. And I hope that this earnest appeal of mine will not fall on deaf ears.

#### EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM HAS OUTLIVED ITS USEFULNESS

That the present system of education in India has served its original purpose and that it is no longer suited to the present and future requirements of the country has been recognised in many quarters. Originally designed with a view to training our countrymen to assist the State in the administration of the country and with the subsidiary aims of helping the Government in the suppression of moral and social evils, prevalent in the country and of increasing its material resources and prosperity, the system has done good work and may be said to have largely succeeded in its main object.

As regards exploitation of material resources and the growth of economic prosperity educated Indians have not only not come up to the expectations of the original framers of Indian Educational policy but have egregiously failed. It is now nearly 80 years since the Universities have been established in India and it is sad to note that with the solitary exception of Sir C. V. Raman there is not a single outstanding personality in our province who has achieved a name in the realm of Science. What is the cause? Where lies the fundamental error in educational system?

In our Presidency we have three Universities, and we have 29 first grade colleges, 11 professional colleges, 15 second grade colleges, and 410 High Schools. In the quinquennium (1929-33) nearly 12,000 graduates came out of these three Universities and during that period 11,727 young men passed the Intermediate and 31,735 were declared eligible for University studies in 1930-34. More than a third of the S. S. L. C. eligibles do not continue their studies. These together with the graduates make up a total of 17,200 and then there are the failures aggregating roughly to 20,800—which means a total of 50,000 for 5 years, or 10,000 every year. Service in the various departments of the Government which is most coveted, can

not absorb even a tenth of these. Banks, business firms, railways, insurance companies—all combined cannot provide jobs for another tenth of the above lot. What is to become of the rest? What are they doing to-day? What can they do? Many of them have had their small holdings sold for meeting the cost of their education. They cannot go back to the land, for they are either unable to do manual labour or have become misfits in rural life. They cannot serve in industries, because they are not trained for any. Their sole aim—and it must be admitted the aim of the education they received—was to secure jobs in public services and private employment. The present system of education as conceived by great-hearted British statesmen a century ago has in its essentials persisted in spite of periodical examinations by committees of experts, like the Hunter, Raleigh and Sadler Commissions. There is an urgent need for a daring orientation of our policy and methods in education.

The educational system can do a lot in assisting people to secure employment and earn a livelihood. As things stand at present, our educational system is such that it envisages every class below the B. A. class as a feeder to the one above! It is so conceived that the boy who passed out of the 3rd form is intended to study for the School Final and is not fit for any thing else. The School Final boy is trained in such a way that he should be fit for receiving college education and nothing more. And the Intermediate is likewise a preparation for the B. A. and Post Graduate studies. This system must go. The ladder system must be abolished. Rural elementary education should be so shaped as to enable boys who leave the school to go to the fields and take to agriculture with some elementary knowledge of that industry. Secondary education should be so self-sufficient, and the scholars who are content with High School Education should have received such instruction as would befit them for subordinate places in the various services, or, with a little more training in mills and factories, for serving as skilled labourers—fitters, mechanics, carpenters, smiths, plumbers, etc. It is here that the great army of skilled workers is to be brought into existence leaving the work of the supply of men for higher direction and technical and scientific experts to the Colleges and Universities. They will give us the staffs Corps and the Generals of industries—studying, examining, planning and directing them.

#### COLLEGE EDUCATION SHOULD BE MADE COSTLIER

College Education should be made more costly and Universities and Colleges should be self-supporting institutions or should mostly depend on private endowments and must be intended truly for the entrants to the learned professions, or cultural attainments or scientific research. But that this aim may not make University education the monopoly of the wealthy or leisured classes, exhibition and scholarships—from State funds or private benefactions—will have to be provided for the meritorious but indigent scholars. Even in Colleges, vocational guidance and personal training are essential. In America, this is recognised to its fullest extent. For people situated as we are, poor and ever-increasing in numbers and depending largely on the sole industry of agriculture, a type of education has to be evolved which will not only ensure in a full measure the bare necessities of life but tend to raise our standard of living and inculcate in us a desire to live a fuller and a richer life. Not that I deprecate cultural education that the Universities impart: we do want the leisured and the deserving to have true cultural training, but the need for a comprehensive educational policy to enrich the lives of the masses is greater and self-evident. Indeed our very existence is otherwise imperilled.

#### THE PROBLEM OF THE JOBLESS

I shall now proceed to deal with the main theme of my address, the problem of the unemployed. This may be treated under two heads, the development of industries including agriculture and colonisation in India and abroad.

Employment in industries postulates the existence of such industries as require a large man-power. There is no denying the fact that our industrial progress has been small and slow. There are two factors which contribute to industrial development—the material and the human. An abundance of raw-products, their easy accessibility and sufficiency of capital for their exploitation, constitute the material factors, and labour and skill the human factors. It cannot be disputed that we have raw-material in abundance in our country and in our province. There is enough capital in the land—only it is shy and

suspicious. Want of mutual confidence is the chief reason why the available capital is not forthcoming at present. Labour is cheap and under the conditions of unemployment to which I have been referring, this country, I think, can compete with any other country in the world in the matter of the supply of cheap labour. But this labour is unskilled and here again we look to our schools and colleges and to a changed educational system to provide the necessary skill. For our industries to grow and flourish, our unskilled labour must be turned into skilled labour, and their proper and legitimate share of success in a world where competition is daily growing keener depends largely on the intelligent direction which such skilled labour works under. This directing intelligence is not less essential than skilled labour. Capital and intelligent direction could be imported; but skilled labour is a category apart and the only way to ensure it for our country's economic uplift is to examine and alter the objective and content of our education system.

Let me take this opportunity to congratulate this University on its happy decision in establishing the College of Technology. It is a momentous step in the right direction. Neither the older University of Madras nor the newer Annamalai University has attempted to start such a useful institution. I assume that this College of Technology is intended to be a College of Applied Science on the lines of the Imperial College of Science and Technology in London. I hope that in this College will be imparted a highly specialised instruction in Science in application to industry. The very existence in the Andhradesa of the College of Technology will be an object lesson to the industrialists to enable them to understand how valuable and essential science is to them and what science can do to develop industries and to what pitches scientific education can raise industrial efficiency. It is the application of science to industrial efficiency. But pure science is not enough. It is the application of science to industry that is the need of the country. The time has arrived when your College of Technology should soon undertake the work of the Applied Sciences of Mining and Metallurgy. The mineral wealth of the Telugu country is enormous. Gold and coal in the Godavari Agencies and diamonds in the Wajrakarur region could be prospected. No capital is at present forthcoming to open and work mines, not because, as many assert, our people are not sufficiently enterprising or rich enough, but because the necessary knowledge in the Applied Science is wanting. The college of Technology will supply it, and supply will incite the demand. I refuse to believe that we should have our technological institutions only where there are sufficient industries to absorb the students turned out by such institutions. The people who object to the establishment of such institutions on the above ground are arguing in a vicious circle. Nor do I agree that money will not be forthcoming or that we Andhras are not enterprising enough.

#### DO THE TELUGUS LACK ENTERPRISE ?

We Telugus are by nature an emotional race. We are prone to quick conversions and rapid transmutations when our emotions are deeply stirred. We are not really Andhras but when the Andhras conquered us about the 3rd century before the Christian era, we readily adopted their name, assimilated their literature and incorporated their culture. When on its religious side the Indian Renaissance showed itself in the eclecticism of Raja Ram Mohan Roy a century ago and the eloquence of Keshub Chandra Sen was having converts to Brahmoism, the Telugus showed an emotional receptivity to its doctrines, and there are no two greater more honoured, more inspiring names in the Brahmo Samaj movement than the late Kandukuri Veerasalingam Pantulu and Dr. Sir R. Vankataratanam Naidu, who happily is still in our midst. And in recent years of storm and stress, even in the unfortunate and regrettable turmoils and troubles, the Telugu country stands out prominently—the Andhras vying with the Guzaratis in the practice of the doctrines of Mr. Gandhi—their racial product—and Guntur pitting itself against Bardoli for the prize in the no-tax campaign ! I am confident, therefore, that if these surging emotion and quick receptiveness to new ideas are properly disciplined and profitably directed, not only will there be no dearth of adventurous spirit among us but a great future awaits our race. Given the help of Applied Science and an efficient set of staff, engineers and technical men who can develop and build up industries, the necessary funds and enterprise will undoubtedly be forthcoming.

## AN ENGINEERING COLLEGE FOR ANDHRA

This leads me to the question of an Engineering College. What we want is an institution where mining and metallurgy could be studied. If our mining industry is to be developed such a College cannot be avoided. Such an institution could be part of the College of Technology instructing in applied science. What we can avoid is a college of Engineering of the type of the one at Guindy. Our young men must go to that College for instruction in Civil, Mechanical and Electrical Engineering. There is no point in duplicating institutions.

## NEED FOR AN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Our immediate need is a College of Agriculture. The seven districts within the jurisdiction of this University are very fertile. But our methods of agriculture are not well developed. In many places they are still primitive. No doubt the Agricultural Department has been doing excellent work but the only Agricultural College in the Province is situated at Coimbatore far away from our area. We badly need an Agricultural College of our own. Our rice, cocoanut and tobacco problems need not only a College but a Research Institute. I wonder if Waltair is a proper place for it. Samalkot or Tedepalligudem seems to be best suited.

The College which I am suggesting should be coupled with a Research Institute. Both the College and Research Institute should be University Institutions, but while the College should teach pure science, the Research Institute should not only conduct research work but also train students in the applied sciences of Agriculture and allied departments, and be a branch of the College of Technology under the control of the faculty of Applied Science.

## UNEMPLOYMENT AND GROWTH OF POPULATION

So far I have dealt mostly with unemployment amongst the educated, but the problem of unemployment is much wider than that and it is bound to be serious with the march of time. The alarming rate at which our population has been increasing is agitating the public mind and causing great concern regarding the unemployment of this ever-increasing population. Our population according to the Census of 1921 was 319,000,000 and of 1931 352,000,000. The population of India has increased by 11 per cent in the decade 1921-31.

This enormous increase of 34 millions in a single decade raises two important and unpleasant problems. One is as regards the supply of food. There are people who believe that Indians are even now underfed. There are others that believe this is not true. The vast works of irrigation, constructed long before and much developed in recent years, seem to make the problem of food scarcity very remote. Famines as such are undoubtedly unknown to-day, but they are bound to become frequent if the population goes on increasing at the present rate. Be that as it may, it does not seem to be an immediate problem.

The real and the most imminent trouble, therefore, seems to come from the second problem, viz., unemployment. Though the death-rate is still very high in our country the birth-rate has arisen in a greater proportion meaning an increase in population and resulting in unemployment. Two remedies have been suggested by students of economics and writers on this aspect of the national problem : (1) Scientific and constructive measures of eugenics and birth control and (2) Raising the rate and tendency to stabilise population. There are great difficulties in the way of popularising measures of birth control in India. But, for a proper appreciation of the dangers of over-population and unemployment, methods of birth-control will have to be resorted to. The second remedy—the rise in the standard of living—may not be feasible under the present circumstances and it is difficult to say how far this law will operate in India.

## SETTLEMENT ON LAND

Two other remedies suggest themselves to those who are interested in this problem of over-population and its attendant risks. And these are (1) Settlement on land in India in areas which are not yet brought under cultivation, and (2) colonisation abroad. The extent of British India (excluding Indian States) is 669,345,000 acres. Of this we find that 146,810,000 acres, or 22 per cent, cannot be cultivated either because they are not fit for cultivation, being barren, or are occupied by buildings, water, roads or otherwise, and that an extent of 87,962,000, or 13.2 percent



of the total is occupied by forests. The remaining 434,573,000 acres, or 65 per cent, is the area available for cultivation. Of this 49,618,000 acres, or 7 per cent, are left fallow and 154,017,000, or 23 per cent, are capable of being cultivated but are not taken up or are abandoned; and the actual area under cultivation is 228,161,000 acres, i. e., 34 per cent of the total. It will thus be seen that the cultivable waste and the fallow lands amount to 203,635,000 acres which is nearly as much as the land actually now under cultivation. Even if 53 million acres out of this is left out as fallow and pasture land for cattle and as not economically productive, there will still be 150 million acres available for raising crops. This would represent an area of 229,900 square miles capable of supporting a population of 55,721,750 persons by agricultural occupation, assuming that a square mile of cultivable land can support 250 people. If these lands are brought under cultivation not only would the problem of food supply be solved but also to a large extent the problem of unemployment. For two decades, at any rate, there will be no anxiety—I say for two decades, because economists tell us that past experience has shown that the output of commodities has not grown with the same rapidity as the population. “Back to the land” cannot be a slogan despised by a people 70 per cent of whom live by agriculture. Once again we have to inveigh against our educational system. The educated man thinks it beneath his dignity to put his hand to the plough. His contempt for manual labour is proverbial. The love of office, the pride of power, the certainty of a regular salary, the chances of unholy requisites and the respect which even the lowest minions of the Sircar command have deflected men from land. This great love of power must cease. This unworthy desire for ill-gotten wealth must end. Otherwise there is no hope for us. Here we have five-eighths as much land available for cultivation as the area that is actually under cultivation. If only this land is made available to the unemployed educated and if our educated men are prepared to turn to land, dropping their ideas of securing jobs, there will be a chance of not only finding sufficient employment for all educated and uneducated unemployed but also of increasing the agricultural production of the country and, consequently, for an increase of national wealth. Educated men will certainly prove better agriculturists than those who adopt the traditional methods of cultivation. If educated Indians take to agriculture, the process of development would be rapid, and ere long we can take out of the land the highest it can yield. Will not educated Indians turn from their search of an impossible El Dorado and strive for a life which is as honourable and embodying to themselves as it is necessary and urgent to their country?

#### COLONISATION ABROAD

The next remedy is colonisation abroad. This is a difficult and thorny problem at present because racial antagonism, colour prejudice and economic jealousy rouse passions and vitiate judgment. Countries like the U. S. A., Canada, South Africa and Australia have completely closed their doors against Indians.

India's necessity for a place under the sun is insistent and urgent, and I have still faith in the far-seeing statesmanship of Britain and in the innate sense of justice and equity among the British race and I have a profound and unshakable belief that both alike for high moral purpose and enlightened interest, this problem (in South Africa) will be solved in course of time, and in a manner satisfactory to all. The objections, so far raised against Indian immigration, are mainly based on the status of the previous immigrants and the low standard of living to which they are accustomed—an objection which cannot be raised, if educated Indians, decently provided with means enough for settlement on land, are prepared to migrate.

I must now bring to a close these few thoughts on some of the problems that are agitating us. Young friends, you have all taken your degrees and I congratulate you on your success. But I must warn you against making this the last phase of your student career. It is not an uncommon phenomenon among our graduates to heave a sigh of relief at the end of the college course and consign their books to the corner of a shelf, there to lie untouched and uncared for. They forget that the academical training they receive is not an end in itself, but only a means to an end and an equipment for a more useful and a more systematic appreciation of literature and the problems that one can never afford to pass by unconcerned if they wish to play an honourable part in life and society. It is not given to all of us to be creative artists, but certainly all of us are welcome to drink at the fountain of inspiration which a poet or a philosopher is, and to diffuse those



fertilising thoughts in a busy indomitable world and thereby contribute in our humble way to the commonweal of mankind.

#### WANTED—LEADERS

The primeval sin of humanity is avidya—ignorance. And the deeper we probe into the subtle and mysterious realms where the manifold happenings of life are fashioned, the more clearly shines forth the truth of this saying. With assiduous zeal and unflagging energy, strive after knowledge and shred ignorance; and remember the saying of Socrates that an unexamined life is not worth living. Graduates of the Andhra University, you are stepping out into the larger world of life and its stern realities and inexorable demands will soon be upon you. May it be given to you in any station of life that you may be called upon to fill to act honourably, courageously and worthily. In the great times that we are living, we want leader and workers who "sophisticate not Truth, love no darkness, nurse no delusion and allow no fear". But if the times are great there are also round about us evil influences and dangerous tendencies against which I cannot too strongly caution you. There is need, in an abundant measure, for that supreme quality of Charity. Have as the hall-mark of your education—Equanimity. And great is the need of this equipoise of mind for us to think seriously about the problems that confront us. As men think, so will they live, and it is the lives of men, and not blind Fate, that weaves the destiny of world.

Before I close let me beg you to ponder over this exhortation of the late Lord Rosebery. "Day by day the horizon of human possibility, which now lies so unbounded before you, must contract. The time must come when, under the stroke of illness or the decay of nature, hope and health, the pride and power of life and intellect, which now seem so inseparable from your triumphant youth, will have passed away. There will then be no surer consolation, humanly speaking, than the consciousness of honest hope fulfilled, of health not abused, of life and intellect exerted in all its strength and fulness, not like water poured on the sand but for the raising and bettering in some degree of some portion of your fellowmen.

Young friends, fare you well! Graduates of the Andhra University, God be with you!

## The Punjab University Convocation

*Sir Abdur Rahim* delivered the annual address at the Convocation of the Punjab University at Lahore on the 22nd. December 1934. In the course of his address, he said :—

Most of our universities have inherited a system of education which although it has served its purpose in the past, is now judged by competent authorities to be too primitive to meet our modern requirements. I shall not for a moment deprecate a system to which indeed we ought to be grateful for the good work it has done. It has brought within our reach the treasures of western arts and science and has given an impetus to the intellectual advance of the people. It has given us a mental attitude and an out-look on life which characterise the western world. Above all, it has made it possible for us to have an Indian national ideal, by giving us a common language and a unity of culture. But in spite of these great benefits the present system of education has been subjected to a severe criticism and vital reforms have been suggested by educationists individually as well as collectively in conferences.

The educational system of a country, it has rightly been said, must be suited to its needs. During the last seventy-five years, from the time when the first three Indian universities were established to the present day, the conditions of Indian life, both social and political, have undergone a change which is unprecedented in the history of the country. The old social order which restricted education to a small privileged class is being replaced by a new order in which the rigid class distinctions and the well-protected class privileges have been effectively challenged. There has been a general rise in the standard of living; and with the introduction of democratic institutions in the country there has been a rapidly increasing demand

for mass education. Our conception of education and particularly of university education cannot remain unaffected by these changing conditions. We are conscious of the defects of the present system of education, indeed they are so obvious that they need no special mention. They are inherent in the history of university education in this country. It is generally recognised today that the system of education in India has grown, especially in its inception, without any conscious planning; it has not followed any deliberate well thought out outline of development. The great men of the past to whose wisdom and foresight we owe the first three of the existing Indian universities introduced a new system of education into this ancient country with objects which at the time were most desirable; but they could not be expected to have a long enough and a clear enough vision of a distant future and its numerous problems. We have received abundantly from these great institutions the good gifts of education, we have also inherited from them an old tradition with all its present difficulties. Our heritage from the past includes both assets and liabilities. You, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, in your convocation address last December envisaged some of the difficulties which you described as 'grave and difficult problems which cannot be solved in a moment.' 'How to adjust the claims of a rapidly changing future with those of a conservative past? How to adjust the demands of pure learning with the students' demand for a livelihood? To hold the balance between the discovery of new truths with the conservation of abstruse learning, the moulding of the minds and character of the mass of undergraduates, and special practical training for particular vocations?' You referred to these serious problems as difficulties you had to encounter in this university. But these are difficulties for us all. In Delhi we have been considering identical problems; but their solution seems beset with numerous difficulties. Each problem has its special character and depends on conditions which affect other regions of the vast field of education. The educational system of a country is a very complex structure, its different stages and parts are so interconnected that reform in any one direction is not possible without disturbing the equilibrium of the whole.

#### RECONSTRUCTION PLAN

Much thought has been given in recent years to the problems of the stage of admission to the university and the proper disposal of the two Intermediate classes, the shortening of the period of secondary education and the provision for vocational training. They owe their origin to the compelling forces of circumstances produced by a variety of causes, economic, social and political. The problems are perplexing in the extreme and the difficulty of their solution consists in the strength of an old tradition and to a large extent in the fact that each of them leads us inevitably to the reconstruction of the system of education as a whole. The possibility of such a reconstruction has been discussed by prominent Indian educationists in conferences and on other important occasions. The trend of thought in university circles seems to be in favour of a recent Resolution of the Government of the United Provinces which proposes (i) that the Secondary Course should be shortened and (ii) that the Intermediate Course should be lengthened by one year. This means naturally that admission to the university should be at a later stage, that is to say, after the Intermediate Course.

One great advantage of the shortened secondary course would be the restraint it might impose on the present drift of countless youths to the university who, by their age and their inadequate mental equipment are unfit for a university career. Nothing is more tragic than to witness the futility of the struggle of thousands of our young men to get through the university to pursue, without much hope, a goal which is not within their reach. The tragedy is aggravated by the economic and educational waste and the hopelessness of the prospect to which this course of drift inevitably leads.

To prevent this wastage of time, labour and resources we should try to divert the majority of our pupils to whom university education is unprofitable to occupations or to vocational education in separate vocational institutions where they can have what they really need a practical industrial training which will turn them into useful members of society.

The shortened secondary course should 'provide a general education complete in itself, untrammelled by university requirements.' I need not here dilate on a programme of mass education or discuss the nature and scope of the secondary course which will be the minimum general education for every child. But there is

one point which needs some consideration. One of the chief difficulties, which have hampered the progress of secondary education in this country, is the bilingual instruction we have enforced on our children with a view to prepare them all for a future university course, where the medium of instruction is English. In the reconstructed system of education, which we are now considering, there will be no need for this bilingual instruction at the secondary stage. We can, therefore, increase the efficacy of the shortened secondary course by providing all teaching except in English through the vernacular. After the completion of this stage a careful selection should separate those who are fit for higher education from others who have neither the mental equipment nor the capacity for such education. For the latter, a vocational training is the only useful education and the earlier they go in for it, the better for them. For, apart from other considerations, they would, in that case, be far more likely to be absorbed into the humbler occupations of life than would be many of those who now graduate or fail to graduate.

Following a shortened secondary course, we now come to a three-year Intermediate course for a smaller number of pupils desirous of admission to a three-year Degree Course in the university. This is difficult from our present intermediate course in two important respects. First, it is longer by one year and secondly, which is a more vital point, it is separated from the university, not only in actual teaching but in administration and control. The separation of Intermediate classes from the university was strongly recommended by the Calcutta University Commission who considered that the development of university work demanded a re-organisation of Higher Secondary education and that for this purpose it was necessary that the work done in Intermediate Colleges of the university should be transferred to institutions of a new type to be called Intermediate Colleges. This authoritative view was almost immediately adopted by some of the Indian universities which were created or re-organised after the publication of the Commission's report. In practice, however, it has been found exceedingly difficult to carry out this recommendation of the Commission. The colleges do not seem to favour the separation of the intermediate classes from the degree classes. The reasons underlying this are partly financial and partly academic. In the first place, the intermediate classes that are now attached to the colleges are remunerative. The employment of a combined staff for the B. A. and Intermediate classes is economical and, incidentally, gives the Intermediate students the benefit of the lectures of the more highly qualified teachers who are normally employed for instruction in B. A. classes.

This attitude of the college is, I admit, not entirely unfair, particularly under the existing conditions. But we are now considering a reconstructed system of education in which all the different stages are readjusted. The intermediate stage should be considered in relation to the other stages of the entire educational system. With a shortened Secondary Course, and a three-year Degree Course, the Intermediate Course ought to have a distinct and separate place of its own. In order to maintain the standard of university education in the true sense of the word, the teaching resources of the university 'should not be diverted to the instruction of school children who are as yet unfitted to receive university education.' The ideal of a university as an association of scholars engaged in the pursuit of truth can hardly be realised if we continue to admit into it every year an overwhelming number of immature youths.

#### VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

I have incidentally mentioned the need of vocational education for the average pupil who is unfitted to pursue a course of higher learning and research. You will, I hope, bear with me if I venture to say a few more words on this very important subject. There seem to be two extreme views in respect of the way in which the distressing problem of middle-class unemployment should be dealt with. On the one hand there are those who trace the evil to a defective system of education and demand an increased facility for vocational education by the establishment of vocational institutions on a much more generous scale throughout the country, and on the other hand, there are some thinkers to whom the present difficulties are largely due to the alleged inadequate attention of Government to the economic and industrial needs of the country. Government can do a great deal, they maintain, by developing the industries of the country and by creating new opportunities for our young men. There is much to be said in support of either contention. But no single remedy is adequate for such a complex and

difficult situation. Mere provision of vocational schools will not create new industries to absorb young men who receive a vocational training. On the other hand, we may add to the number of the unemployed by creating a new class of unhappy people, of trained men without work. We have already in the country not a few young men who have already received an industrial training abroad, but are waiting long for suitable places which may offer them a chance of employment. This unfortunate position makes the problems for the educationist still more difficult. He has to devise an educational system which not only provides a vocational training suited to the economic and social conditions of the country; but creates in your young men a mental attitude which will not reject the humbler occupations of life as beneath their dignity. Middle-class unemployment is not entirely an educational problem. It is rather a social problem for the effective solution of which the educationist should co-operate with the statesman, the administrator and the organiser of industries.

But have we nothing to say, in the meantime, to the young men and women who are here with us this afternoon, but will be leaving this hall in a few minutes for a word which may not be as sympathetic as their *alma mater* and may not offer them immediate prospects of a useful career.

#### MIDDLE CLASS UNEMPLOYMENT

Young graduates of the year, the problem of middle class unemployment is not altogether unfamiliar to you. You may find life now more difficult and the prospect more gloomy than did the generations before you, yet it will be wrong on your part to be daunted by what appears to be a cheerless outlook. The only test of a developed character which I hope your university has given you, is its attitude towards difficulties. A man of solid worth is never daunted by them. They only increase his endeavour; and ceaseless endeavour is the secret of success and greatness. Do not consider any difficulty unsurmountable, for those who do so, never succeed in life. Take difficulties as opportunities and not as impediments, and success is yours.

There is a great deal of futile talk about the disillusionment of youth after it leaves the sanctuary of a university; but disillusion can only follow an illusion. It can come to those who have tried in the university to get only a passport to employment. For many amongst such a disillusion most certainly waits. But they who realise the true purpose of university education have no cause for disillusionment. Young men and women with the intellectual equipment and inspiration of a university education need not find life without useful work. It may be difficult for them to secure high posts in Government services: but in a country full of poverty and ignorance it should not be hard for them to find congenial work in rural reconstruction—in the reorganisation of the economic life and the education of the poorer classes. Do not, for a moment, regret the education you have received, even though you may not find it lucrative. The business of a university is to make the life of the country richer, not by bringing material wealth to its graduates, but by imparting culture to its students. A man of real culture is one who has developed his entire personality. Self-realization is the essence of culture. The fullest development of a man's intellectual and spiritual qualities is its goal, and these qualities are not to be judged by a utilitarian standard. The true worth of university education is spiritual and cultural rather than material and utilitarian. I have put this idealistic view of education before you with the purpose of drawing your attention to a truth, the realisation of which may change your outlook on life.

On the university men and women of a country depends the preservation and the progress of its culture, which is the soul of its civilization and the very essence of its life. India is the proud possessor of an ancient culture, which is the result of the evolution of centuries. It has been, again and again, enriched by the infusion of other cultures and civilisations. In its catholicity is reflected the greatness of India's soul, which has never rejected a truth as foreign and has yet preserved its essential character. The continuity of Indian culture depends on you. This is a rapidly changing age; old ideas are crumbling down and there is thus a void in the mind of the thinking world today. Into this void rush in casual thoughts from all quarters. The novelty of every new thought attracts the young. I shall be the last person to advise you to fight shy of these new ideas. Face them and examine them. It is new thoughts that lead to progress. But I shall most certainly ask you to weigh every new idea before you accept it. Do not be



carried away by the sheer novelty of an original thought. Remember that all bad things in the world like all good things must have been new at one time or another. Act therefore with the greatest circumspection.

#### SEARCH FOR TRUTH

Remember one thing more in your choice—the peculiar characteristics of life in your country. What is elixir for one man is poison for another; and this is no less true about countries and nations than it is about men. Therefore, be not carried away by false analogies. Blind imitation is the course of all intellectual life, which is built less on obedience and adoration than on rebellion and scepticism. But it is also true that there can be no successful rebellion without the discipline of obedience and no useful scepticism without an apprenticeship in faith and even in adoration. Therefore, learn the true secret of obeying and rebelling, believing and disbelieving in this complex life, for it is the glory of a cultured man to understand it. The search for Truth is an arduous journey and full of pitfalls, but this understanding will teach you how to distinguish the true from the false and will enable you to reach the goal unscathed by the trials and difficulties besetting your path.

To you, if to any, this day should stand as the culmination of a period of apprenticeship under your teachers for the life which is waiting for you outside, removed from the protective care of your *alma mater*. This culmination, like every other in the history of a progressive mind, is only a beginning. We are alive and progressive only so long as our culmination are our beginning. If your character has been properly trained, you should have learnt that no end is an end in itself. It is only a means to another and a greater end. A properly regulated life is not like a vast level stretch of land; it is like a mountain range of many peaks. When you have climbed one peak, you have a vision of another higher and more majestic. And thus, through landscapes of grandeur and beauty, you pass on to the majesty of the most sublime heights. It may not be given to every one of us to reach the highest peak, but this is no reason why we should not endeavour to reach our highest.

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## The Aligarh Muslim University Convocation

*Sir Shah Muhammad Suleiman*, in his extempore address at the Convocation of the Aligarh Muslim University held at Aligarh on the 22nd. December 1934, said:—

An extremely disappointing feature of the modern system of education is that many youngmen having obtained distinctions in their academic careers are utterly unable to find means to maintain themselves, much less to support their families. During the last century when the supply of men possessing Western knowledge was small, the Government services alone were enough to absorb the entire output of the schools and the colleges. But now with the increasing growth in the number of matriculates and graduates, the supply exceeds by far the existing demand, leading to an acute situation and chronic unemployment. With the tremendous increase in the number of qualified men turned out every year, the vacancies in the posts can never be sufficient for them, and the acuteness of unemployment is bound to become still more chronic with the advance of years, and discontent will foster hatred against the existing order of things.

No doubt, the increase in the number of students during the last decades has been phenomenal; and judging from the vastness of the population which still remains to be educated and the small percentage of literacy attained so far, there can equally be no doubt that the numbers will go on increasing at a still greater rate. It is futile to try to limit the number of boys and girls reading in the schools and colleges. If accommodation is not available, the schools and colleges themselves will multiply. For a country with hundreds of millions of people, it cannot be said with any truth that the present number of students is by any means too large. Proportionately speaking, the number is considerably smaller than in countries like England; and there is no justification for taking any steps to prevent an



increase in the future. Howsoever unfortunate in some respects the ultimate consequence may be, the increasing demand for education is a hopeful sign and it is inevitable that the number must multiply and increase at a progressive rate. It is hopeless to try to stem the tide; the remedy is to remodel the system of education so as to find new fields of occupation for such increasing number.

#### DRASTIC OVERHAULING NEEDED

The time is gone when mere literary or scientific education imparted in most of the Indian educational institutions could suffice to find work for educated young-men and women. The whole system requires a drastic overhauling. The existing institutions, which impart mere general education must be transferred into semi-vocational institutions so as to benefit the students for various callings and occupations. The secondary schools throughout the country are designed pre-eminently to provide purely literary education and qualify matriculates for admission to the universities, and not so much to give them training to adapt themselves to occupations and callings. The existing schools have, no doubt, contributed to the progress of secondary education on a large scale, but it is in consequence of these very schools that the problem of unemployment has become so acute. Boys are taken away from their hereditary occupations and given nothing but a smattering of literary education instead. If the type of education imparted by the schools were changed, their output can be absorbed into agricultural, industrial and commercial activities. Some vocational training should be made compulsory so that no student should be allowed to pass out of school without having learnt some art or craft, on which he could fall back, if he cannot afford to prosecute his studies further. The curriculum of the high schools should include vocational training, and the examination be not a mere test for admission to universities, as it is at present. The problem of unemployment would be solved to a large extent, if instead of creating in their minds a contempt for their trade, the students were given some special training for it, and made more fitted to go back to it. Manual training or handicraft introduced as a compulsory subject would help to give great relief and provide sufficient technical training to a majority of students so as to obviate the necessity of their prosecuting their studies beyond the school stage.

A radical change in the system of secondary education would divert a large number of students at the completion of their school education to useful occupations and callings. Government schools should be gradually transformed into institutions of a specialised vocational character in order to serve as models to similar private institutions. Private enterprises should be directed mainly towards semi-industrial schools, imparting vocational training side by side with general education. The aim should be to have industrial and craft schools in all the important towns, where young men and girls may be trained to earn their livelihood by taking to small industries not requiring much capital.

#### BOTH CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT

On the other hand, the value of higher education should be judged both from the cultural and the utilitarian points of view. The universities have come to occupy a prominent position in our material life; and with the gradual advance of education, their importance is bound to grow greater and greater still. They are without question some of the noblest institutions in the country designed for the extension and diffusion of knowledge. As repositories of human knowledge, they are to collect together and preserve the acquisitions of science and art made in the bygone ages; and as great workshops of learning they must stimulate new discoveries and inventions. They have to interpret the philosophy of the past to the modern mind, strike out a fresh line of thought and open a new way for original investigation. In addition to being the chief seats of learning for carrying on literary study and scientific research, the universities must ever remain the great centres for the cultivation of intellect, refinement of feelings and the building up of character. Their merit would depend on the quantity as well as the quality of intellectual contribution to human knowledge that they are able to make through the devoted labours and valuable researches of their teachers and scholars, and on the cultural education that they are able to impart by their discipline and traditions.

But there is the utilitarian aspect as well. The economic and material progress of a country is linked up with the growth of higher university education. Universities cannot constitute themselves into secluded sanctuaries cut off from the matter of fact life outside; but must play a leading part not only in the cultural

advancement of the country, but also in its economic development, which will be expedited in proportion to the increase of efficiency in technical education, and its pace will be regulated by the growth of university departments where practical knowledge is taught.

#### SYSTEM IS AT FAULT

A larger and larger proportion of the graduates find themselves unable to fit into the economic scheme of the country. It is commonly supposed that this is due to the universities flooding the country with too many graduates. But the fault lies not with the number but with the system of university education, which concentrates attention on literary education mostly and scientific instruction partly, and does not make the students qualified for any trade or profession, except the profession of law and education. It is no wonder that the profession of law is so over-crowded. The universities, which are imparting only general education and are suffering from an utter lack of specialization, should boldly face the fact and mould themselves so as to be in a position to find employment for their graduates in industries, trade and commerce just as much as in the services. The universities would be failing in their duty, if they were to allow their students to be drifted away after completing their courses of study, without any fixed aim in mind, and throw them out into a world of fierce competition, where they may not earn even half as much as they spent as students. The academic authorities ought to be in a position to guide the students under their care in selecting their future lines of occupation; and the courses of study should be so organized as to compel the students to make up an early choice of career.

The universities should readapt themselves to the needs of the time, and must adjust their teaching to the requirements of the various professions, services and industries. University life must be in living contact with the practical problems of the country; and to achieve this the universities must enter into active co-operation with established industrial institutions. It is only by the discoveries and inventions of commercial utility made by universities that betterment of the economic conditions of India can be brought about. What is wanted is an application of scientific research to industrial developments, and this can be procured by co-ordination and harmony between the universities and the pioneer industries of the country. Only a reorganization on such lines will meet the crisis.

#### CO-ORDINATION AND CO-OPERATION

Of late years, much has been said on coordination and co-operation among the various universities. The dream that there should be cooperation in such a way that only a few particular subjects should be taught at one university and at that university exclusively, is not capable of being realized. Co-ordination in the sense that a subject should not be introduced if provision for it exists at some other university can be thought of only when the question of the addition of some minor subjects of lesser importance arises. As far as I can see, the present list of subjects taught in the Indian universities is not such as to leave much room for curtailment or cut. Unitary teaching universities have of a necessity to be self-contained, which implies that there should be facility for the teaching of at least all the important subjects on the Arts and the Science sides. The facilities that exist in the Indian universities, except perhaps in the arts classes, are not very wide, and it is extremely doubtful whether a further limitation would be of any utility at all. If a free choice of the subjects is to be given to the students, the question of combination is a matter dependent on individual talents and aptitude, necessitating adequate provision for all the important subjects. There is bound to be a certain amount of overlapping, and to some duplication of work but it is difficult to see how this can be avoided.

For instance, the number of subjects taught at the Muslim University may, at first sight, appear to be large, but they include only the important subjects, most of which are altogether indispensable. They comprise only the important branches of knowledge, for which there is always a great demand, and in most of which classes are usually full. With the exception perhaps of some solitary subject, it will never be possible to abolish any department altogether. If the number of subjects prescribed at Aligarh were compared with the number of subjects taught at Cambridge, Oxford or London, the contrast would be striking. Perhaps many, who talk of reducing the number of subjects in the Indian universities, are not aware that at the big English Universities well over 150 different subjects are available to students and there is adequate staff to teach all of them.

## INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH

In Western countries, technology dominates the whole of modern life and pervades the entire civilization, and success lies in harnessing the forces of Nature and utilizing them for the purposes of man. Their great prosperity is due to the industrial and mechanical revolution, which has introduced a new method of mass production into industries, yielding better quality for lower prices. This would have hit manual labour very hard but for that fact that the whole world market is available to them. Countries like Germany, Italy and Japan are making their universities great centres of industrial research with a view to stimulating their industrial progress. The secret of the success of the Japanese system of education lies in the quick assimilation of practical knowledge from Europe and America giving only a secondary importance to advanced theoretical researches. Her industrial and economic progress is the direct result of the ready adoption of the scientific and technical knowledge of the West.

Only a rapid expansion of industry, trade and commerce can provide sufficient field for a backward country like India, which has an enormously large population. It can not be denied that there is already a great stimulus to the expansion of business and that great progress is certainly made and new factories are being built every year. Not only the sugar industry but other big industries are developing. We can foresee that in the immediate future progress will lie in the direction of electrification of all the important cities and the extension of water works to all the towns. These alone will absorb a very large number of electrical and mechanical engineers. Then again, the conversion of vast stores of raw materials, now exported out of India into finished products can furnish an ample field for employment of technical experts. Besides manufacture, there is the great agricultural industry, which is the mainstay of the large masses in the rural areas; their methods are crude and primitive and have not kept pace with the advance of scientific improvements adopted in other Colonies of the Empire, which are competing with India. There is great room for improvement of the quality of land which immensely increase the value of agricultural produce.

It should be the concern of the universities to foresee the future and so organise themselves as to be able to turn out qualified men and women to meet the country's demand. What we badly need in India is a large body of well-trained and well-skilled persons, who, with their industrial education and training, would by their intelligence and labour, add to the productive capacity of the country and its output of manufactured articles, and in that way inaugurate an economic prosperity all round.

If a university had an unlimited purse at its disposal or an inexhaustible source of income, the problem of University education would be simple enough, and nothing more would be needed than a mere reproduction of the departments of Western universities. But the paucity of financial resources inexorably puts a limitation on one's ambitions; expenditure has to be curtailed and kept within narrow bounds for want of sufficient funds. The question then resolves itself into one of mere preference; which department should have more money than another, the needs of which department can be postponed for another year, how available funds should be apportioned among rival claims and so on. Unfortunately technological departments involve very heavy initial costs to provide accommodation and equipments, and require heavy recurring expenditure for their maintenance. Hence there is a natural reluctance to open such branches as would swallow up a great part of the income and commit the university to large recurring and non-recurring expenditure. Accordingly the common University policy throughout India, except Benares, has been to sacrifice the more useful departments in order that the universities might have multifarious activities.

## BENARES UNIVERSITY'S SUCCESS

The Benares University has succeeded in realising three great ideals, which are specially suited to a country like India. First its teaching staff is more moderately paid than that of any other Indian University. Secondly, the life led by the students of the university is much simpler and cheaper than at any other university. And thirdly, the university is not only imparting theoretical knowledge, literary and scientific, but also giving technical training thus making a real contribution to the industrial development of India and supplying the needs of Indian industries and Indian factories. It has no doubt been far more fortunate than the Aligarh Univer-

sity in receiving munificent donations and grants from Indian Princes and other philanthropists; but this generosity may, in no small measure, be due to the accepted utility of the subjects taught there.

The authorities of the Benares University appreciated at an early stage that technical knowledge combined with the practical training is best calculated to promote indigenous industries and develop the material resources of the country. Their efforts have been concentrated on devoting more than a quarter of the entire funds to the establishment of the departments of technology, Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, Mining and Metallurgy, Applied Geology and Surveying, Botany and Agriculture, Industrial and Pharmaceutical Chemistry and other subjects of practical importance are included in the Faculty of Science. Manufactures of oils, soaps and scents, enamelling and electro-plating and numerous other practical things are being taught. The Engineering College has about 550 students, who while pursuing their studies, are also engaged in producing electric ceiling fans, other mechanical appliances and small machines. Great attempt is being made to produce cheap commercial products as substitute for imported materials. The departments of Technology are in direct touch with manufacturers and have secured a special grant from the Government of United Provinces. The great success achieved by these departments lies in this fact that the engineering graduates of the Benares University are to be found in every town in India holding suitable posts. They are thus not only earning a living for themselves but actually helping the industrial and commercial development of the country. This is a great achievement of which the Hindu University can justly be proud, and which example the Muslim University would do well to follow.

Of course, the inadequacy of funds is the greatest stumbling block in the way of improvements. It is not always found possible on financial grounds to open new departments, however much they may be needed. Indeed, sometimes even existing departments have to be badly starved. But once the policy of introducing technical education has been decided upon, it is possible gradually to transform existing departments by suitably changing the syllabus, even though the process be slow.

#### LEAD SIMPLE LIVES

In a poor country like India where the average annual income per head is about 1-15th of the average amount per head, which is yearly saved and put in the savings bank accounts in England, the financial resources of private institutions are bound to be always critical. Private universities cannot have a bountiful supply of funds, and cannot afford to maintain a highly paid teaching staff. The teaching staff of the Muslim University have already made a sacrifice and cheerfully submitted to cuts in their salaries. As security of tenure is essential for a hearty devotion to work, it would be a wise course to give them a definite assurance to remove all future anxieties. If financial resources do not improve much, the inevitable consequence would be a new revised scale of lower salaries for new entrants without adversely affecting the present incumbents.

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# **Joint Parliamentary Committee Report On**

## **The Indian Constitutional Reform**





# THE JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE REPORT

## On The Indian Constitutional Reform

The report of the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform was published on the 22nd. November 1934. The composition of the Committee was as follows :—

*House of Lords (16 Members)* :—Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Chancellor, Marquess of Salisbury, Marquess of Zetland, Marquess of Linlithgow, Marquess of Reading, Earl of Derby, Earl of Lytton, Earl Peel, Lord Middleton, Lord Ker (M. Lothian), Lord Harding of Penhurst, Lord Irwin, Lord Snell, Lord Rankeillour, and Lord Hutchinson of Montrose.

*House of Commons (16 Members)* :—Major Attlee, Mr. Butler, Mr. Cadogan, Sir Austen Chamberlain, Mr. Cocks, Sir Reginald Craddock, Mr. Davidson, Mr. Isaac Foot, Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, Mr. Morgan Jones, Sir Joseph Nall, Lord Eustace Percy, Miss Pickford, Secretary, Sir John Simon, Sir John Wardlaw-Milne, and Earl Winterton.

*Delegates from the Indian States* :—Rao Bahadur Sir V. T. Krishnama Chari. C. I. E. ; Nawab Sir Liaquat Hyat-Khan, O. B. E. ; Nawab Sir Muhammad Akbar Hydari ; Sir Mirza Muhammad Ismail, C. I. E., O. B. E. ; Sir Manubhai Nandshanker Mehta, C. S. I. ; Sir Prabhasankar Dalpatram Pattani, K. C. I. E. and Mr. Y. Thombare.

*Delegates from Continental British India* :—His Highness the Right Honourable Sultan Sir Mahomed Shah, Aga Khan, G. C. S. I., G. C. I. E., G. C. V. O. ; Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, K. C. I. E. ; Dr. B. R. Ambedkar ; Sir Hubert Carr ; Mr. A. H. Guznavi ; Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney ; Sir Hari Singh Gour ; Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar ; Mr. M. R. Jayakar ; Mr. N. M. Joshi ; Mr. N. O. Kelkar ; Begum Shah Nawaz ; Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. Patro ; Sir Abdur Rahim ; The Right Honourable Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, K. C. S. I. ; Sir Phiroze Sethna ; Dr. Shafa'at Ahmad Khan ; Sardar Bahadur Buta Singh ; Sir Nripendra Nath Sircar ; Sir Purushotamdas Thakurdas. C. I. E., M. B. E., and Mr. Zafrulla Khan.

*Delegates from the Province of Burma* :—Sra Shwe Ba ; Mr. C. H. Campagnac, M. B. E., Mr. N. M. Cowasji, U Kya Din, Mr. K. S. Harper, U Chit Hlaing, U. Thein Maung ; Dr. Ba Maw, Dr. Ba Pe, Dr. Ma Saw Sa, U Shwe Tha and Mr. S. A. S. Tyabji.

Volume I of the Report, which, along with Record Papers containing certain memoranda, has been issued to the Press, consists of two Parts.

Part I of Volume I consists of 427 pages. It contains the Report proper with two appendices which are reprints of the White Paper and the proposals regarding Burma. A comprehensive index to the report is also appended relating separately to India proper and Burma.

Part II of Volume I contains the proceedings of the Joint Select Committee, a report of the discussions, the draft reports and amendments thereto proposed in the Committee.

Volume II relates to records. Of these, records A 1 and A 2 and B 1 and B 2 and B 3 are notes and memoranda on reforms for Burma by the Secretary of State and the Burma delegates or report of discussions between the Committee and the Burma delegates. This volume also contains records relating to India. Those marked C 1, C 2 and C 3 have been separately printed and have been issued along with Volume I. C 1 consists of papers submitted by the Secretary of State such as those relating to Family Pension Funds, Terrorism in India, federal finance, federal legislature and Orissa boundaries. C 2 consists of papers submitted by Members of the Committee such as that on direct vs. indirect election by Lords Derby and Zetland and Sir A. Chamberlain ; memoranda by Lord Rankeillour on the relations between the Houses of the Legislature in regard to supply, on courts and on special powers in regard to defence ; the Derby memorandum on commercial discrimination ;

the Attlee memorandum on responsibility in the Centre; and the Hardinge memorandum on the Anglo-Indian community. O 3 consists of papers relating to irrigation and forestry. The cost of the proceedings of the Committee runs to £29,409-3-4.

### Press Summary

The following is the summary of the Report issued to the Press :—

In presenting their Report to Parliament the Joint Select Committee place on record their appreciation of the help derived from their discussions with the Indian delegates. Particular mention is made of the Joint Memorandum signed by all the British Indian delegates which is stated to have been of great service to the Committee as focussing British Indian views.

The principles of a constitutional settlement are discussed in an introductory section. The Committee note that the subtle ferments of education, the impact of the War and the growth of a sense of nationality have combined to create a public opinion in India which it would be a profound error for Parliament to ignore. Though those who entertain these aspirations constitute but a small fraction of the vast population of India and though in these circumstances alleged manifestations of public opinion are often of doubtful value, nevertheless a public opinion does exist strong enough to affect what has been for generations the main strength of the Government of India, that is, its instinctive acceptance by the mass of the Indian people. History has repeatedly shown the unwisdom of judging the political consciousness of a people by the standard of its least instructed class.

But a recognition of Indian aspirations, with a necessary preface to any study of Indian constitutional problems, is an insufficient guide to their solution. Responsible Government to which these aspirations are mainly directed to-day is not an automatic device which can be manufactured to specification. It is not even a machine which will run on a motive power of its own. Framers of written constitutions may be misled by deceptive analogies. The mere copyist of British institutions would fall into dangerous errors if he were to assume that an Act of Parliament can establish similar institutions in India merely by reproducing provisions found in the constitutional law of the United Kingdom. On these grounds the Committee hold that a Constitution Act for India must seek to give statutory form to 'safeguards' essential to the proper working of Parliamentary Government, but which in Great Britain have no sanction save that of established custom; and when this is done it will remain true that Parliamentary Government in India may well develop on lines different from those at Westminster.

In affirming the view that constitutional development should be evolutionary, the Committee state that the safest hypothesis on which they can proceed, and the one most in accordance with British constitutional history, is that the future government of India will be successful in proportion as it represents not a new creation but the natural evolution of past tendencies.

The Committee suggest that from that point of view Parliament may well approach the first and basic proposal of founding the new constitutional system in India on the principle of Provincial Autonomy.

Far-reaching as is this constitutional change, it is not a break with the past. The Act of 1919 introduced a large measure of Responsible Government, and the governments thus established have been in operation more than a decade. The Committee agree with the Statutory Commission that a sense of responsibility can be acquired only by making men responsible politically for the effects of their actions, and their sense of responsibility must be weakened if the government functions in watertight compartments partitioned off by the Constitution. The Committee therefore endorse the proposal that in all Provinces dyarchy should be abolished and Ministers made generally responsible over the whole provincial field.

The enforcement of law and order and the maintenance of an upright administration are mentioned as the fundamental functions of government. While agreeing that provincial Ministers must be made responsible for their performance, the Committee note that it is well to remember what according to British practice is the nature of that responsibility. It is a responsibility which no executive can share with any legislature, however answerable it may be to that legislature for the manner of its discharge. That has been true of the relationship of the Government of India to Parliament in the past. It must remain true of the relationship of provincial Ministers to provincial legislatures in the future. In the special circum-

tances of India it is appropriate that this principle of executive independence should be reinforced in the Constitution by the conferment of special powers and responsibilities on the Governor as the head of the provincial executive.

In discussing misunderstandings as regards safeguards both in England and India, the Committee observe that to many Englishmen the term conveys the idea of an ineffective rearguard action making a position already evacuated; to many Indians it seems to imply a selfish reservation of powers inconsistent with any real measure of responsible government. Though too late to invent a new terminology, the Committee make it clear that they use the word in a more precise and quite different sense. On the one hand, the safeguards they contemplate have nothing in common with paper declarations sometimes inserted in constitutional documents dependent for their validity on the goodwill or timidity of those to whom the real substance of power has been transferred. They represent on the contrary a substantial power fully endorsed by law. They are not only not inconsistent with some form of responsible government, but in the present circumstances of India it is no paradox to say that they are the necessary complement to any form of it, without which it could have little or no hope of success. It is in exact proportion as Indians show themselves not only capable of taking and exercising responsibility, but able to supply the still missing factors in Indian political life that both the need for safeguards and their use will disappear. The essential elements in the new constitutional settlement which the safeguards should be designed to supply are the need for flexibility, for strong executives, for an efficient administration, and for an impartial authority to hold the scales evenly between conflicting interests. The success of a Constitution depends far more upon the manner and spirit in which it is worked than upon its formal provisions. It is impossible to foresee the exact lines which constitutional development will eventually follow. It is therefore the more desirable that those upon whom responsibility will rest should have all reasonable scope for working out their own salvation by the method of trial and error. In other words, the new Indian Constitution must contain within itself the seeds of growth.

The Committee emphasise that Provincial Autonomy requires a readjustment at the Centre. To create autonomous units without any corresponding adaptation of the existing Central Legislature would in the Committee's opinion give full play to the powerful centrifugal forces of Provincial Autonomy without any attempt to counteract them and ensure the continued unity of India. The Committee express the view that the unity of India would be seriously endangered without a constitutional relationship between the States and British India. So far as the Committee are aware no section of opinion in England or British India is prepared to forego an All-India Federation as an ultimate aim of British policy. The question for decision is whether the measure of unity which can be achieved by an all-India Federation, imperfect though it may be, is likely to confer added strength, stability and prosperity on India as a whole, that is, both on the States and on British India. To this there can in the Committee's opinion be only one answer, an affirmative. The economic ties between British India and the States are discussed, and the Committee observe that when experience is daily proving the need for the close co-ordination of policies, they cannot believe that Parliament, while introducing a new measure of decentralisation in British India, would be wise to neglect this opportunity of establishing a new centre of common action for India as a whole.

The Committee state that the attraction of Federation to the States clearly depends on the fulfilment of one condition that in acceding to the Federation they should be assured of a real voice in the determination of its policy. If the States are irked by the exercise by the present Government of India of powers in matters intimately affecting the States, their exercise by Ministers responsible to a purely British India electorate could hardly fail to lead to friction. The Committee agree with the Statutory Commission in thinking that a responsible British India Centre is not a possible solution of the constitutional problem. They hold it one of the main advantages of an All-India Federation that it will enable Parliament to draw a line between responsibility at the Centre and reservation at the point most likely to provide a workable solution.

In concluding the introductory part of their Report the Committee comment that the plea put forward by Indian public men on behalf of India is essentially a plea to be allowed the opportunity of applying principles and doctrines England herself has taught. All sections of public opinion in England are agreed in principle that this plea should be admitted. No one has suggested that a retrograde step

should be taken, very few that the existing state of things should be maintained unaltered. By general admission the time has come for Parliament to share its power with those whom for generations it has sought to train in the arts of government.

Having accepted the broad conclusions of Provincial Autonomy and an All-India Federation the Committee, while recognising that Provincial Autonomy must precede central change, state that the same Act should lay down a Constitution both for the Centre and for the Provinces, in order that the full intention of Parliament should be made clear. Federation is not left as a mere contingency of the future. The Committee advise that the interval between Provincial Autonomy and the inauguration of the Federation should not be longer than is necessitated by administrative considerations. As regards transitory provisions to cover the gap between Provincial Autonomy and Federation, the Committee observe that though it will be necessary to keep in being the existing Central Legislature and no change would be required in the Central Executive, it is nevertheless clear that the establishment of Provincial Autonomy will necessitate consequential changes in the powers of both the Central Legislature and Executive differing but little from the changes which will result from the establishment of Federation.

#### PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY

The Committee endorse the general plan of the White Paper for a statutory delimitation of the respective spheres of government between the Central and Provincial Governments. However carefully the lists of subjects of legislation are drawn up including a list of subjects of concurrent jurisdiction, nevertheless a residue is inevitable. Accepting the White Paper proposal, the Committee agree that the allocation of the residue should be left to the Governor-General.

The White Paper plan to create new Provinces of Sind and Orissa is approved, but it is recommended that the Orissa boundaries should be extended to include that portion of the Jeypore Estate recommended for transfer by the Orissa Committee of 1932 together with the Parlakimedi and Jalandra Maliahs and a small portion of the Parlakimedi State including Parlakimedi town.

The Committee pay a tribute to the wise far-seeing action of His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad in agreeing to the joint administration of the Berars with the Central Provinces. It is suggested that the Governor should have a special responsibility to secure the expenditure in the Berars of a reasonable share of the joint revenues.

#### PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVES

In agreeing that dyarchy in the Provinces should be abolished the Committee endorse the proposal that over practically the whole of the provincial sphere the Governor should be amenable to the advice of non-official Ministers selected from the Legislature. The Committee approve the White Paper proposal that Ministers should advise the Governor in all matters other than the administration of Excluded Areas, and matters left to the Governor's discretion, for example, the power to withhold assent to legislation.

In view of the special difficulties in India in the way of unqualified majority rule as understood in Britain, the Governor may occasionally have to exercise on his own responsibility powers that in the United Kingdom would be exercised on the advice of Ministers. The Committee generally approve the list of special responsibilities recommended in the White Paper but make certain suggestions for their definition.

The Committee agree that for the discharge of his special responsibilities the Governor will need power to secure finance and legislation. The Committee, following generally the view taken in the Joint Memorandum of the British Indian delegates, propose a modification to emphasise the distinction between Governor's Acts and those of the Legislature.

#### LAW AND ORDER

The responsibility of Ministers over the provincial field involves the transfer of all departments of a Provincial Government, including those concerned with Law and Order. In order however to avoid the intrusion of political pressure into questions affecting the internal discipline of the Police Force, the Committee consider that the Governor's consent should be necessary to the amendment of Police Acts and certain Rules thereunder. It is also recommended that there should be special protection for secret intelligence reports.



In view of the special problem that may be presented by terrorism, the Committee consider that there should be a power in the Governor himself to assume charge to such extent as he may judge requisite of all anti-terrorist activities of Government. In the Committee's opinion it will be necessary to exercise this power forthwith in Bengal unless conditions have materially improved by the time of the introduction of Provincial Autonomy.

#### THE PROVINCIAL FRANCHISE

The White Paper proposals for the Provincial Franchise are based on the Report of the Indian Franchise Committee. Their broad effect is to increase the electorate from 7 million including 315,000 women to 29 million men and 6 million women, i. e., from 3 to 14 per cent of the population. The Committee are satisfied that these proposals will produce a representative electorate, but make certain suggestions designed to increase the number of women electors. While rejecting indirect election by local groups the Committee do not preclude the possibility that it may become feasible later for some such change to be recommended by local legislatures for the approval of Parliament.

#### PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURES

No change from the White Paper proposals is suggested in the composition of the Provincial Legislatures, except that, on the ground that conditions are substantially the same, second Chambers are proposed for Madras and Bombay in addition to Bengal, the United Provinces and Bihar.

The Committee consider that Provincial Upper House should not be liable to dissolution, but that one-third of the members should retire at fixed intervals.

#### COMMUNAL AWARD AND POONA PACT

The Committee are definite in their opinion that communal representation is inevitable at the present time. They describe as well-thought out and well-balanced the arrangement for the composition of Provincial Assemblies embodied in the Communal Award.

As regards the Poona Pact, the Committee express the view that in their opinion the original proposals of His Majesty's Government were a more equitable settlement of the general communal question, and more advantageous to the Depressed Classes in their present stage of development. But, since the Pact has been accepted as an authoritative modification of the Award, the Committee are clear that it cannot now be rejected. They are, however, disposed to think that if by agreement some reduction were made in the number of seats reserved to the Depressed Classes in Bengal, possibly with a compensatory increase in the number of their seats in the other Provinces, the working of the new Constitution in Bengal would be fair.

#### FEDERATION AND THE INDIAN STATES

The special position of the Indian States in an All-India Federation is fully recognised. The Committee see the declarations of their attitude by Rulers a recognition of the solid advantages not only to British India but to themselves of the entry of the States to Federation. The Committee emphasise the fact that the accession of State cannot take place otherwise than by the voluntary act of its Ruler. The Constitution Act will only prescribe a method whereby the State may accede and the legal consequences which would follow. In the words of the Report "there can be no question of compulsion so far as the State are concerned."

Themselves regarding the States as an essential element in an All-India Federation, the Committee accept the principle proposed in the White Paper that the accession of a sufficient number of States should be a condition precedent to Federation. They accept the White Paper proposal that the Federation should not come into existence until the Rulers of States representing not less than half the total population of the State and entitled to not less than half the seats allotted to the States in the Federal Upper Chamber have signified their desire to accede.

The Committee agree that representatives of the States in the Federal Legislature should be appointed by the Rulers of the States concerned. The White Paper ratio of representation between the States and British India is endorsed. The Report contains a scheme of distribution of States' seats which has been under discussion for some time past between the Viceroy and the Princes and which while

unsceptible of minor adjustment, has met with a large measure of support among the States. The Committee comment that a scheme on these lines would be reasonable and appropriate. Arrangements are suggested for temporary weightage in compensation for non-accessing States.

While recognising that the list of subjects accepted by the Princes as federal may not be identical in every case, and while agreeing that there are States who will be able to make out a good case for the reservation of certain subjects, nevertheless the Committee consider that deviations from the standard list should be regarded as exceptional and not admitted as of course. They make it clear that there can be no obligation on the Crown to accept an accession, when the reservations desired by the Ruler would make such accession illusory.

The rights of paramountcy over the Indian States at present exercised on behalf of the Crown by the Governor-General-in-Council clearly could not be exercised by any federal authority. The Committee fully agree that outside the federal sphere the States' relations will be exclusively with the Crown, the right to tender advice to the Crown within this sphere lying with His Majesty's Government.

In dealing with the area of federal jurisdiction the Committee recommend that Aden should be transferred to the administrative control of His Majesty's Government on certain definite conditions not later than the date of Federation.

#### RESPONSIBILITY AT THE CENTRE

The Committee approve the proposals in the White Paper for the Federal Executive, namely, that the Governor-General with the assistance of not more than three Counsellors, should administer the Departments of Defence, External Affairs, Ecclesiastical Affairs and British Baluchistan, and that in all other Departments he should be guided by the advice of Ministers chosen from the Federal Legislature, subject to his powers under "special responsibilities" which would follow generally those of the Provincial Governors except that the Governor-General would have a special responsibility for the financial stability and credit of the Federation. To assist him in the discharge of this special responsibility there would be a Financial Advisor whose services would also be available to the Federal Ministry. The Committee make it clear that the Counsellors could not be Members of the Council of Ministers, but they agree that joint deliberation between Counsellors and Ministers should be encouraged.

The Committee do not concur in a proposal for a Statutory Committee of Indian Defence, but are of opinion that an advisory body similar to the Committee on Imperial Defence might have advantage. Neither do they think it necessary to set up a Statutory Defence Committee of the Legislature; but provided the extent and methods of consultation with the Legislature are understood to rest with the Governor-General, they see no objection to the information of any Defence Committees that the Federal Government and Legislature may consider useful.

#### THE FEDERAL LEGISLATURE

The Committee accept the White Paper proposals regarding the size of both Houses, the ratio in each House between British India and States' representatives, and the number of seats allotted to communities and special interests in the Lower House. The Committee think it important that the Muslim community should have secured to it, as the White Paper proposes, one-third of all the British India seats.

The Committee's proposals for the method of electing British Indian representatives to both Houses are an important departure from the White Paper scheme. The respective advantages and disadvantages of methods of direct and indirect election to the Federal Lower House are discussed. The Committee express themselves in favour of indirect election by the Provincial Lower Houses, the various communities voting separately for their own representatives. One of the reasons given for this preference is the apparent impossibility of retaining the direct system as the level of the franchise in course of time approaches adult suffrage.

On the other hand, the Committee feel strongly that it is not possible for Parliament to lay down to-day the exact method of constituting the Federal Legislature for any long period of time. They recommend therefore that indirect election should be open to future review and express the hope that if after experience has been obtained of the working of indirect election Indian opinion thinks modification required, the Federal Legislature should lay its own proposals before

Parliament according to procedure for which provision is made in the Report. The Committee suggest that some form of indirect election based on a group system may provide the ultimate solution.

The Committee accept the White Paper principle of indirect election to the Council of State, but if Members of the Federal Assembly are elected by Provincial Assemblies, it is necessary to establish different electoral colleges. It is recommended that in the case of bicameral Legislatures the electing body should be the Provincial upper House and in unicameral provinces an electoral college should be formed of persons elected for Upper Houses in bicameral Provinces. As under the White Paper, election would be by single transferrable vote. The Committee prefer that the Council should not be dissoluble. Its members should be elected for nine years and one-third replaced every third year.

#### THE PUBLIC SERVICES

The Committee recommend that recruitment by the Secretary of State to the All-India Services should cease except to the Indian Civil Service and Indian Police. They cannot entertain any suggestion for a change in the system of recruitment to these two services simultaneously with a fundamental change in the system of government. They think, however, that there is much to be said for the recruitment in India of the Indian element in both those services. The Committee state that their recommendation is not intended to be a final solution, but is designed to secure the efficiency of the constitutional machinery. The Committee agree that the whole matter should be the subject of special enquiry at a later date. They deprecate any definite date prescribed in the Constitution Act, but hope it will be found of advantage to hold the enquiry after five years.

The Committee agree to the appointment by Provincial Governments failing to secure a sufficient number of satisfactory recruits. The proposals for Public Service Commissions are accepted as generally satisfactory. The Committee recommend that a reference should be included in the Instruments of Instruction of the Governor-General and Governors to the fact that the expression "the legitimate interests of minorities", includes their due representation in the Public Services.

#### THE JUDICATURE

The Committee approve generally the White Paper proposals for a Federal Court.

The White Paper proposes to enable the Federal Legislature to establish a separate Supreme Court for the hearing of appeals from the Provincial High Courts in civil cases and criminal cases involving the death penalty. This would inevitably result in an overlapping of the jurisdiction of the Federal Court, and the Committee would prefer to deal with appeals in civil cases by empowering the Legislature to extend the jurisdiction of the Federal Court. They would then sit in two distinct Chambers, though the Judges might to some extent be interchangeable. As regards criminal cases, the Committee conclude that no provisions for appeal are required beyond those at present existing.

#### COMMERCIAL AND OTHER FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

The Committee divide this question in two separate issues—discrimination against British commercial interests and trade in India, and discrimination against British imports.

As regards the second of these issues, they point out that it would be of great advantage to define in the Constitution Act the principles already governing the relations of the two countries. They draw attention to the fact that the "Fiscal Autonomy Convention" would never have been invoked to cover an attempt to penalise British imports and they note that the Indian Delegates have assured them that there will in future be no desire in India to destroy the conception of partnership with the United Kingdom by such attempts.

They recommend that to the special responsibilities of the Governor-General enumerated in the White Paper there should be added a further special responsibility defined in some such terms as follows:—"The prevention of measures, legislative or administrative, which would subject British goods, imported into India from the United Kingdom to discriminatory or penal treatment." They further recommend that the Governor-General's Instrument of Instructions should make it clear that the imposition of this special responsibility is not intended to affect the com-

petence of his Government and of the Indian Legislature to develop their own fiscal and economic policy; that they would possess complete freedom to negotiate agreements with the United Kingdom and other countries for the securing of mutual tariff concessions; and that it would be the Governor's duty to intervene in tariff policy only if in his opinion the intention of the policy contemplated was to subject trade between the United Kingdom and India to restrictions conceived, not in the economic interest of India, but having the object of injuring the interests of the United Kingdom.

As regards discrimination against British trade in India, here again statutory provision by way of reassurance is necessary.

The Committee accept the White Paper proposal that the Governor-General and Governors should have a special responsibility for the prevention of discrimination, but consider it should be made clear in the Act that this responsibility would extend to the prevention of administrative discrimination in any of the matters in respect of which provision is made against legislative discrimination.

The Committee proceed next to lay down definite and detailed proposals under which Indian laws imposing certain conditions and restrictions should not apply to British subjects domiciled in the United Kingdom, to companies incorporated now or hereafter in the United Kingdom, or to British subjects domiciled in the United Kingdom who are connected with companies incorporated in India, now or in future. The Committee consider that these restrictions upon the freedom of Indian Legislatures should be capable of relaxation in so far as corresponding restrictions are imposed by United Kingdom laws upon British subjects domiciled in India. Similar but separate provision should be made for shipping, on account of the special status of shipping in law.

The Committee report on the question of the recognition of medical qualification for registration purpose as between India and the United Kingdom. They note that the Indian Medical Council Act of 1933 provides for the recognition in India of British medical degrees for a period of four years, and they propose that after the expiration of that period there should be an appeal to the Privy Council in the event of either the Indian or United Kingdom authorities refusing recognition to the degrees granted by the other.

#### FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

The Committee reject a proposal that the Constitution should contain a general declaration of the fundamental rights of the subject. But they think that the Act might contain a declaration providing that no British subject, Indian or otherwise, domiciled in India should be disabled from holding public office or from practising any trade, profession or calling by reason only of his religion, descent, caste, colour or place of birth, and it should be extended, as regards the holding of office under the Federal Government, to subjects of Indian States. They think also that there should be provision against expropriation of property except for public purposes.

#### CONSTITUENT POWERS

With a Constitution mainly dependent for its success upon provisions to ensure a balance between conflicting interests, it is impossible at present to grant powers of constitutional revision to Indian Legislatures. At the same time it is essential to provide machinery to enable constitutional modifications to be made without amending Acts of Parliament, and the Committee consider that amendment on certain points should be permissible by Orders in Council to which Parliament has assented.

The Committee also consider that subject to certain limitations and conditions, Resolutions by Indian Legislatures proposing modifications in the Constitution should be laid before both Houses of Parliament with a statement by his Majesty's Government of the action they propose to take.

It would no longer be necessary with the transfer of responsibility for finance to Indian Ministers, that there should continue to be a body in the United Kingdom with a statutory control over the decisions of the Secretary of State in financial matters nor ought the authority of the Secretary of State to extend to estimates committed to an Indian Legislature on the advice of Indian Ministers. But it would still be desirable that the Secretary of State should have a small body of advisors to whom he might turn for advice on certain matters.



The Secretary of State would be free to seek their advice, but would only be bound to consult them and accept their advice in respect of certain matters affecting the Public Services.

The Committee take note of the proposed establishment of a Reserve Bank, which should ensure the ability of India to maintain her financial stability and credit. They recommend that any amendment of the Reserve Bank Act, or any legislation affecting the constitution or functions of the Bank, or of the coinage or currency of the Federation, should require the Governor-General's prior sanction.

For the purposes of railway administration, it is proposed that, subject to the general control over policy of the Federal Legislature and Government, control should be vested in a Statutory Railway Authority working on business principles.

A special section is devoted to an examination of the scheme of finance proposed in the White Paper, on which some suggestions are made as regards details. In commenting on the additional expenditure involved in the contemplated constitutional changes, the Committee express the opinion that, though no formidable new financial burden would be thrown on the tax-payers of India as the direct result of the changes proposed, the necessity for giving greater elasticity to provincial resources, subvention to deficit Provinces, and the separation of Burma will involve a further strain of finances at the Centre. In the Committee's opinion additional difficulties attributable to the change (and, such as they are, they relate mainly to Provincial Autonomy not to Federation) are but part of a financial problem which has in any case to be faced, and which as the Committee hope and believe is already in process of solution. The Committee observe that before the new Constitution actually comes into operation, His Majesty's Government will no doubt review the financial position and inform Parliament how the matter stands. It is suggested in the White Paper that at the last possible date there should be a financial enquiry. The Committee accept this as a suitable procedure, but do not conceive, nor do they understand that it is intended, that any expert body could be charged with the duty of deciding whether the position was such that the new Constitution could be inaugurated without thereby aggravating the financial difficulties to a generous extent. On this point Parliament must at the appropriate time receive a direct assurance from His Majesty's Government.

#### BURMA

Since the publication of the Indian White Paper, the Secretary of State for India has submitted to the Joint Committee proposals for a scheme of Constitutional reform in Burma which may be referred to for convenience as the Burma White Paper. The Committee have also discussed the question with, and received memoranda from a number of Delegates from Burma.

The Committee open this part of their Report with a brief account of the history of Burma, the characteristics of its people and of its geographical and economic features. They are particularly impressed by the isolation of the country, which makes it impossible for its needs to be duly comprehended in India or for it to exercise any appreciable influence upon Indian political opinion. The Committee recount the attempts that have been made in recent years to ascertain the opinion of the people of Burma on the question of the separation of their country from India, from the time when it seemed clear that they were almost unanimously in favour of separation to the time when certain political parties obscured the issue by announcing themselves as opposed to separation except on their own terms.

The Committee have satisfied themselves by discussion with anti-separationist Delegates that they have no desire to see Burma included in an Indian Federation and in any case would only agree to such inclusion if Burma were given special financial and fiscal conditions incompatible with the fundamental ideas of federation and the right to secede at will. No such claims could be conceded nor would they be accepted by the Delegates from India who have been associated with the Committee. The Committee's final conclusion follows that of the Statutory Commission that—"so far as there is public opinion in the country it is strongly in favour of separation."

In recommending the separation of Burma from India at the same time as the introduction of Provincial Autonomy in India, the Committee draw particular attention to the necessity of preserving Burma from injurious economic and financial results, and make their recommendation dependant upon statutory effect being given to a trade agreement to be concluded between the present Governments. Such



an agreement should be limited to the shortest possible period which would allow the two Governments to adjust themselves to the new conditions, and should contain a provision allowing for mutually agreed alterations to be made during its currency. The Committee suggest 12 months as the minimum currency of the agreement, after which either party might denounce it on giving 12 months' notice, but subject to this minimum they would be prepared for the time-limits to be agreed upon between the present Governments of India and Burma. They further consider that with this agreement there might be linked and likewise given statutory force, a convention in respect of the immigration of Indian labour into Burma.

The Committee note that inasmuch as the Government of a separated Burma would be a unitary government its constitution would differ in many respects from that proposed for the Indian Provinces. For example, no question would arise of the distribution of legislative powers. They also note that it is proposed that Burma should be excluded from the legal definition of "Colonies".

The Committee preface their remarks with a statement making it plain that they intend the modifications that they suggest in the Indian White Paper to apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to corresponding proposals in the Burma White Paper. They therefore confine their attention in this section of the Report to necessary divergencies between the two White Papers and to certain questions arising only in the case of Burma.

With one addition, the Department proposed to be reserved to the Governor are the same as those proposed to be reserved to the Governor-General in India. The addition is monetary policy, currency and coinage. There would be no Reserve Bank in Burma and the Committee agree to this addition to the list of the Governor's reserved Departments.

The Committee concur in the proposals that the Governor should be able to appoint three Counsellors and a Financial Adviser. But as the functions of the Financial Adviser would necessarily cover a wider field than those of his counterpart in India, they would not accept the White Paper proposal to allow the Governor to appoint one of his Counsellors to be Financial Adviser. In the interests of the Reserved Departments themselves, and in order to secure the confidence of Ministers, the Committee think it essential that the position of the Financial Adviser should be one of independence.

The White Paper proposes two Houses, a Senate of 36 members, 18 of whom would be elected by the Lower House and 18 nominated from among non-officials by the Governor, and a House of Representatives of 133 members. The Senate would not sit for a fixed term, but one-quarter of its members would retire every two years. The Lower House would have a life of five years unless sooner dissolved.

Detailed proposals for the composition of the Houses and the franchise have been submitted to the Committee by the Secretary of State for India (Records 1933-34, A. I. p. 10), and these are generally approved by the Committee subject to the following modifications.

The Committee do not think that a system of national retirements would effect the desired object of securing adequate representation to minorities and they prefer that the Senate should have a fixed life of seven years, unless sooner dissolved in the Governor's discretion.

The Secretary of State's proposals for the composition of the Lower House provide for 119 general constituencies, of which 25 would be communal with separate electorate, and 14 special constituencies representative of commerce and labour. Communal representation exists at present, and is unfortunately necessitated by racial cleavages. Of the 94 non-communal general seats three are earmarked for women, but as separate seats are apparently not designed by the women of Burma, the Committee would propose to eliminate them and reduce the membership of the Upper House to a total of 130.

The Committee agree generally with the proposals for the franchise for the Lower House, which would increase the electorate from 1,956,000 men and 124,000 women to 2,300,000 men and 700,000 women i. e., from roughly 16 per cent of the population to over 26 per cent. They reluctantly reject a proposal for wifehood franchise, which would increase the number of women voters to 2,000,000 and entail insuperable administrative obstacles.

As regards Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas, the Committee note that the distinction between the two categories in Burma seems to be largely arbitrary, and they consider that the Government of Burma should examine the question *de novo*

with a view to establishing whether any of the areas proposed to be Partially Excluded, in particular the Salween District, should not in fact be classified as Wholly Excluded.

The White Paper proposals in respect of the Public Services and Public Service Commission are substantially the same as those made in the case of India, with additional recommendations to meet the position of officers of All-India, and Central Services now serving in Burma, and the Committee generally approve them, including the proposal which would place the Burma Frontier Service under the sole control of the Governor in his discretion. As in India, recruitment for the railways should be made by the Statutory Railway Board which it is proposed to set up on lines similar to those of the new Indian Railway Authority, and the Committee consider that for the time being some recruitment by the Secretary of State of European Officers to the medical services would be necessary.

The Committee consider that both the education and employment of Anglo-Indians should engage the special attention of the Governor, and that regulations should be made laying down the percentage of appointments in the railways, customs service and posts and telegraphs, which could properly be reserved for this community.

The proposals made in a Memorandum of the Secretary of State for the establishment of a Railway Board in Burma are accepted, except in so far as the Committee consider that the Financial Adviser should not be a member of the Board, and make certain suggestions concerned with the proposed disqualifications for membership of the Board.

As regards the Secretaryship of State, the Committee think there should be separate portfolios for India and Burma, but that on practical grounds it would be desirable that they should be held by the same Minister.

As regards the necessary allocation of existing financial assets and liabilities between India and Burma, the Committee assume that the principle of the adjustment would have to be settled by an impartial tribunal whose awards would be given statutory force by the Constitution Act. They think a tribunal should be appointed as soon as possible.

In so far as this is a matter between Burma and the United Kingdom, the Committee report their proposals made with reference to India and the United Kingdom.

As regards relations between Burma and India, the Committee agree that Indians should be afforded, vis-a-vis Burma generally, the same measure of protection as has been recommended for United Kingdom British subjects in India, but they think that the additional special responsibility to be laid upon the Governor to protect imports from India against penal treatment should be made reciprocal and a similar responsibility in respect of imports from Burma laid upon the Governor-General in India.

The Committee agree that special provision should be made to enable the Burma Legislature to regulate the inflow of Indian labour, provided that such immigration receives the prior consent of the Governor. Some arrangement would also be necessary to safeguard the position in Burma of holders of United Kingdom and Indian medical degrees, but pending further examination of the question the Committee do not put forward any definite proposals.

The proceedings of the Committee indicate various points on which certain members of the Committee submitted proposals which were not accepted by the Committee. Among these two are of special interest since they propose radical departures from the scheme pronounced by the Committee as a whole.

The first of these takes the form of an alternative draft report presented by Mr. Attlee and supported by the three other Labour Members on the Committee. Accepting Dominion Status as the goal of policy, they recognise that it is not possible for India to reach this goal at a single step. They consider that this object should be stated clearly in the Constitution Act so framed to contain possibilities of expansion and development as to enable Dominion Status to be reached without a further Act of Parliament. They desire that the Act should provide against exploitation of the masses and approach the need for safeguards primarily from that angle. They recognise that safeguards are required for minorities, and hold that for the time being it is impossible to avoid communal electorates. They consider it therefore not desirable at present to depart either from the Communal Decision of the Poona Pact. They are opposed to second chambers whether at the centre or in the Provinces.

All-India Federation is accepted. It is considered essential if India is to be a nation that British India and the States should be associated. They recommend that a definite date be fixed in the Act for the inauguration of Federation which should not be contingent upon the entry of a prescribed proportion of States. They think the forces making for Federation so strong that it is certain that before long a majority of the States in numbers and population will accede. They agree that Parliament could not dictate to the Rulers of States where representative institutions exist, representatives to the Federal Legislature should be chosen directly or indirectly by the people.

They agree that special responsibilities should be vested in the Governor-General and the Governors, but hold that the White Paper proposals are drawn in too wide terms. They consider that these powers should be used only in an emergency when breakdown threatens and not be part of the ordinary operation of Government. They suggest that there should be recognised condition under which the Governor-General's special responsibility for the financial stability and credit of the Federation should cease to be operative.

They consider that in the Provincial sphere Indians should be given the fullest opportunities of trying the British system of responsible government. They think, however, that at the Centre responsibility will develop in lines very different from those at Westminster. They contemplate that there should be a closer association of the Legislature with the Executive on lines adopted in the Ceylon Constitution. In their opinion there should be only one Legislative Chamber, directly elected, at the Centre, in which Labour should be given 26 instead of 10 seats.

It is considered that India should have full control over her external affairs except as regards the relationship of the Crown with the Indian States. The specific reservation of a Department of Ecclesiastical Affairs is opposed. They agree that so long as British troops are employed in India it is impossible to bring them under the orders of a responsible Minister. But, regarding this position as anomalous, they suggest a definite programme of Indianisation within a time-limit of 30 years, and a definite date in the Constitution at the end of which Defence should pass to responsible Ministers. A Standing Defence Committee of the Legislature is recommended.

In the Provinces the authors of the draft oppose any limitations on the power of elected Ministers to control the forces of law and order. The evil of terrorism should be dealt with by Indian statesmen backed by public opinion, which they should be able to rally to the support of their own government.

No reason is seen for the provision of special seats for landholders and the special representation of universities, commerce, industry and planting is opposed. Labour should receive at least 10 per cent of the total seats pending the introduction of adult suffrage, provision for which should be made in the Constitution. Extensions of the women's franchise are suggested.

It is proposed that residuary powers of legislation should belong to the Centre.

They agree that the Act might contain a general provision that discriminatory Legislation should require the previous consent of the Governor-General, but apart from that the question should be left to settlement by negotiation between the commercial interests concerned.

In conclusion, general agreement is expressed with the proposals regarding the future constitution of Burma subject to an objection to a Second Chamber of the Legislature and the continuation of the Ecclesiastical Department, and to the hope that the maintenance of communal electorates may be only a temporary expedient.

A contrasting but much briefer amendment is submitted by Lord Salisbury and supported by Lord Middleton, Lord Rankeillour, Sir Reginald Craddock and Sir Joseph Nall. He is not prepared to concede Responsible Government in the Centre but takes his stand on the grant of Provincial Autonomy, supplemented by the establishment of a Council of Greater India, containing representatives of every Province and State the advice of which would be sought by the Viceroy on every issue which is of interest to India as a whole. In the Provinces the Governor is, according to this proposed amendment, to control the Police if he consider this to be expedient.

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